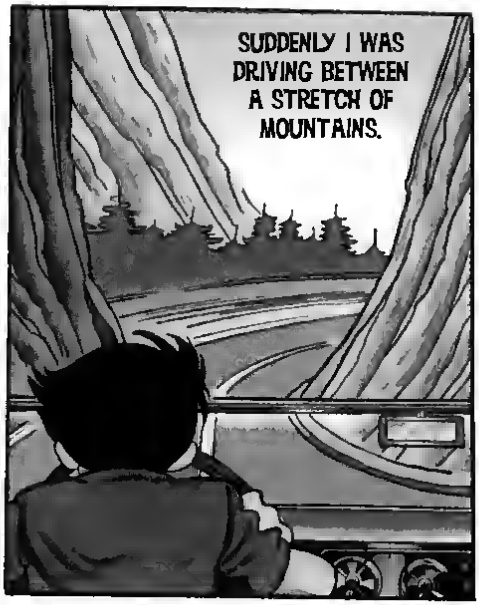
手塚治虫 漫画全集

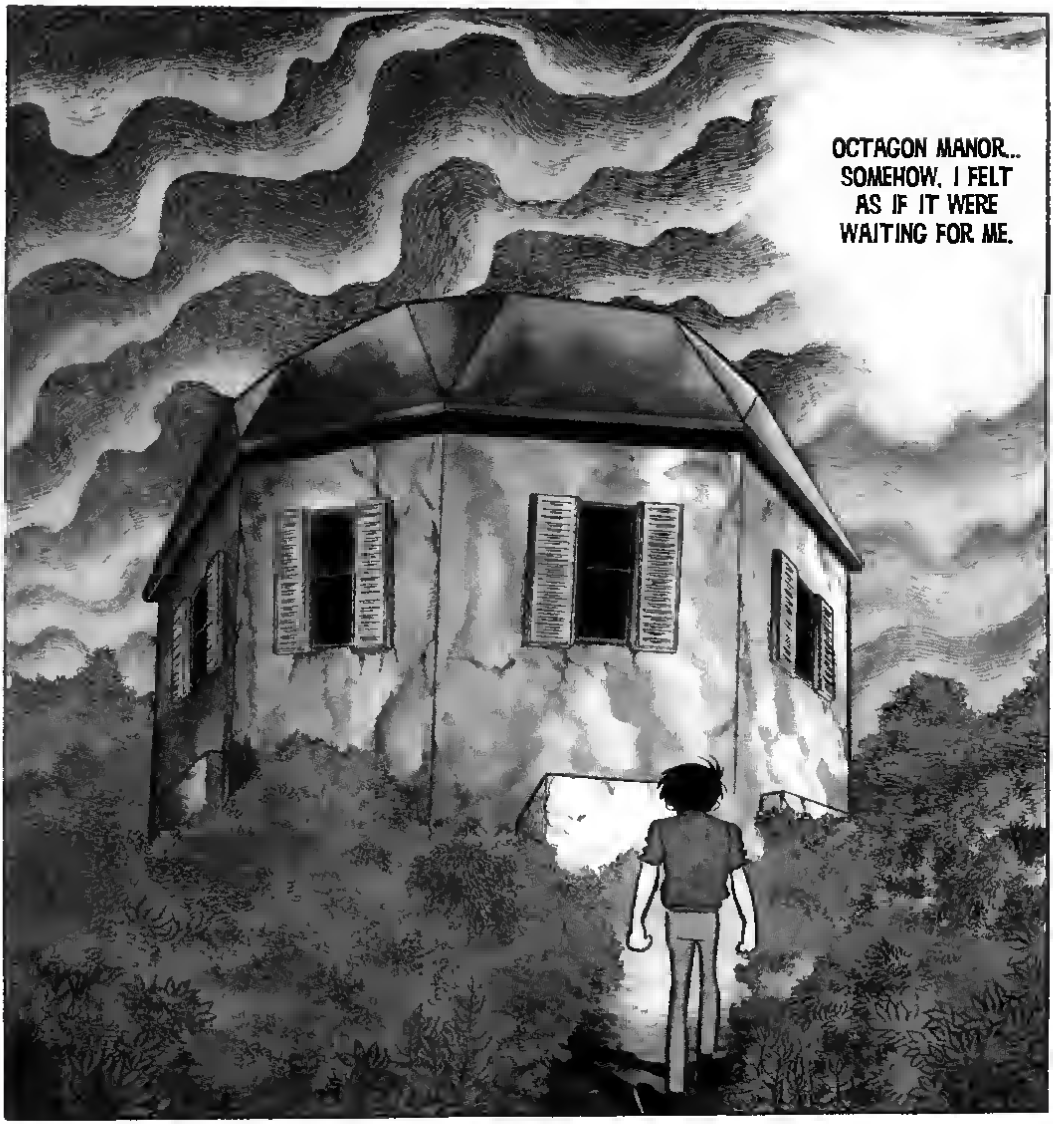
ザ・クレーター

3

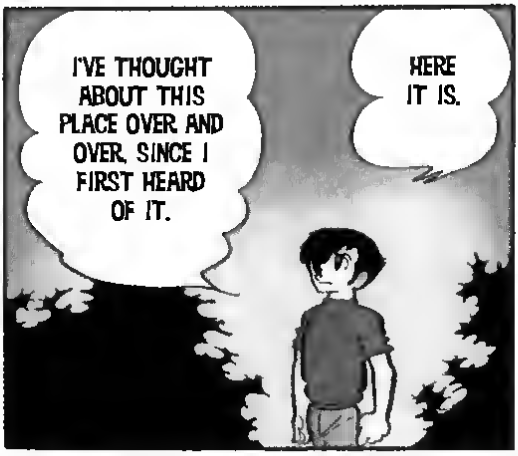
I WAS PROBABLY GOING OVER 140 KM/HR... SOMEWHERE AROUND GOTENBASHI I BROKE OFF FROM THE MAIN HIGHWAY.

THAT'S WHERE I FOUND IT...
OCTAGON MANOR.


SUDDENLY I WAS DRIVING BETWEEN A STRETCH OF MOUNTAINS.

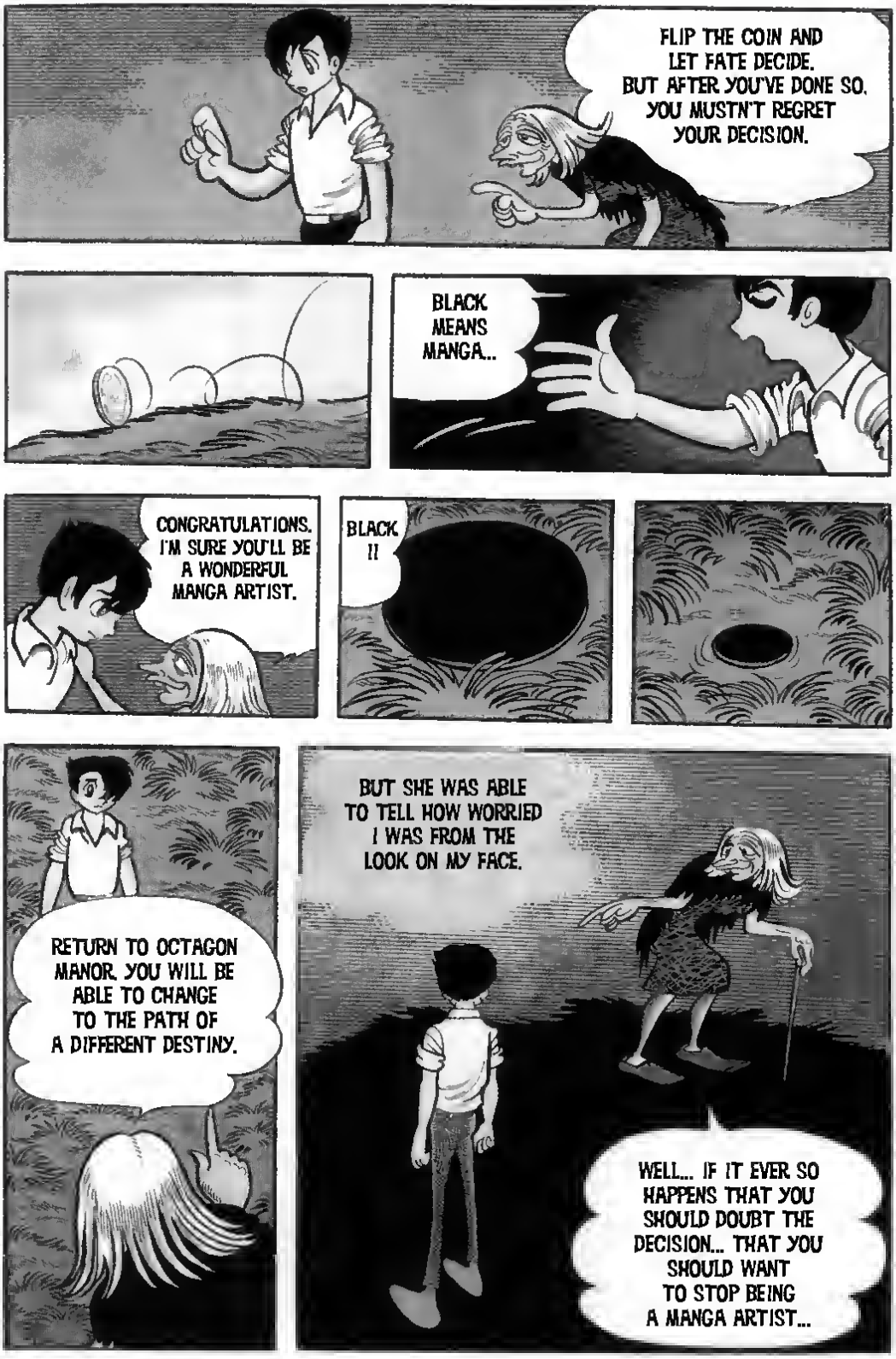

OCTAGON MANOR... SOMEHOW, I FELT AS IF IT WERE WAITING FOR ME.

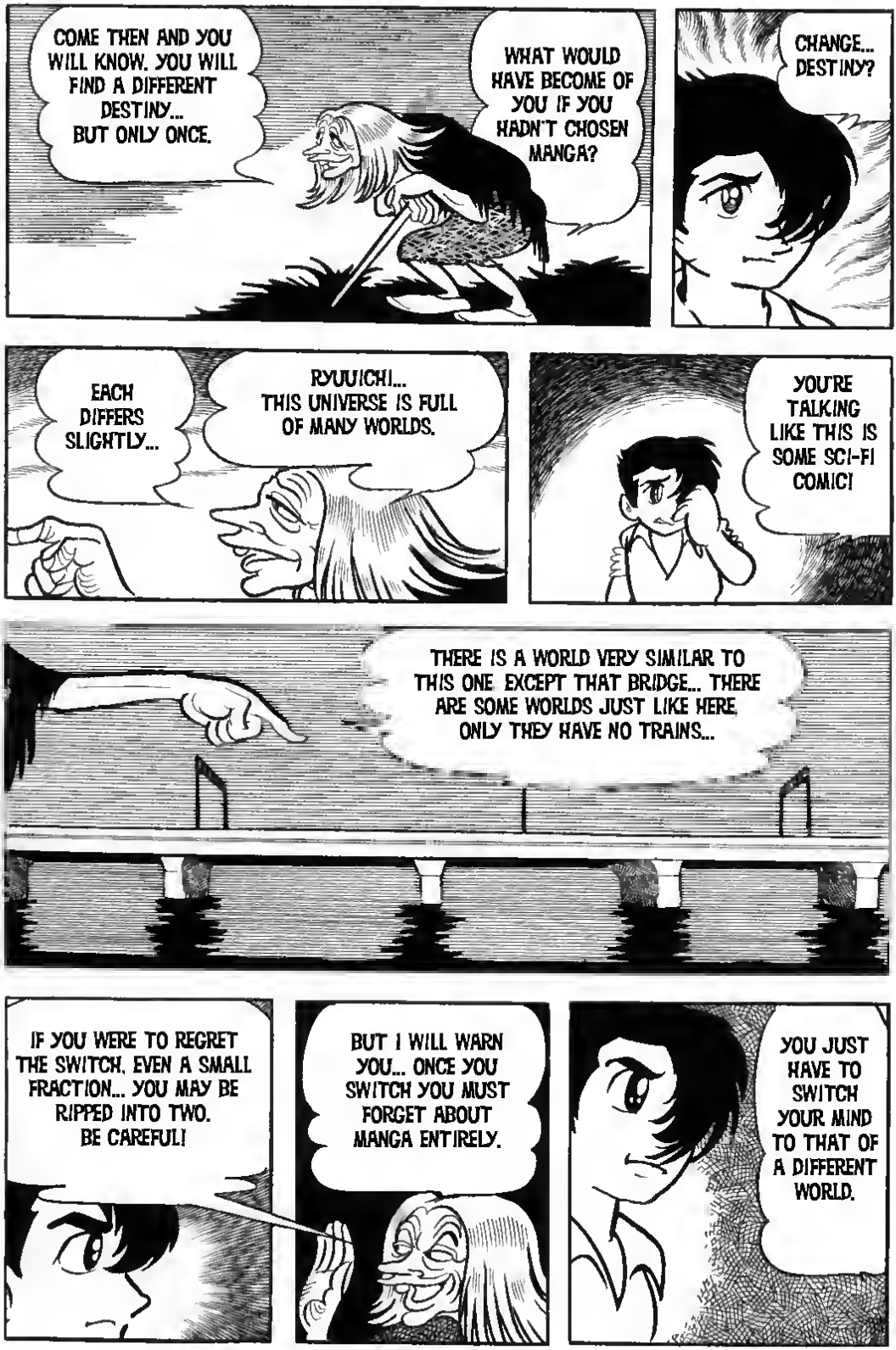
NOW, I'M FINALLY RIGHT IN FRONT OF IT.

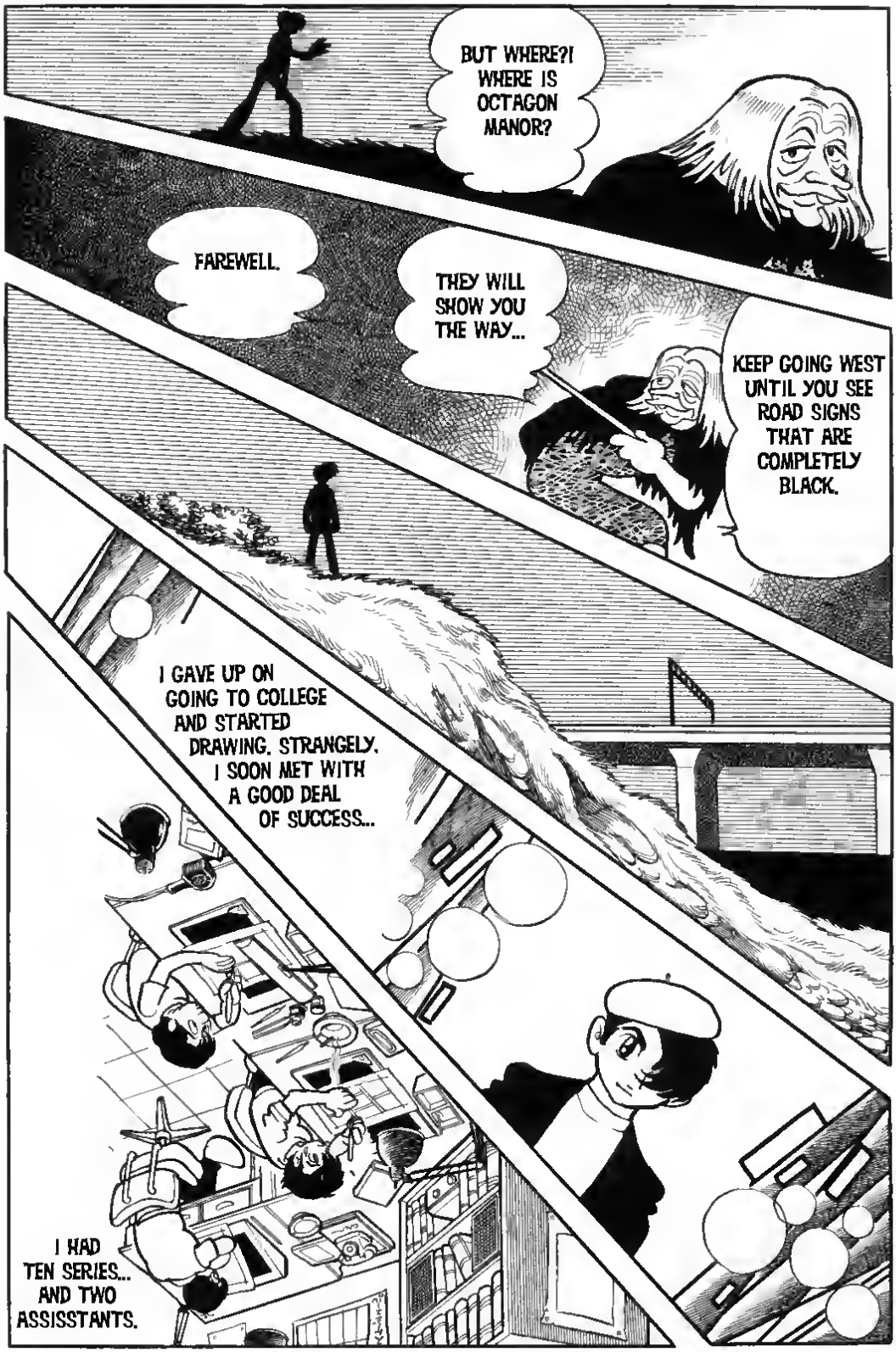

I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT THIS PLACE OVER AND OVER, SINCE I FIRST HEARD OF IT.
HERE IT IS.

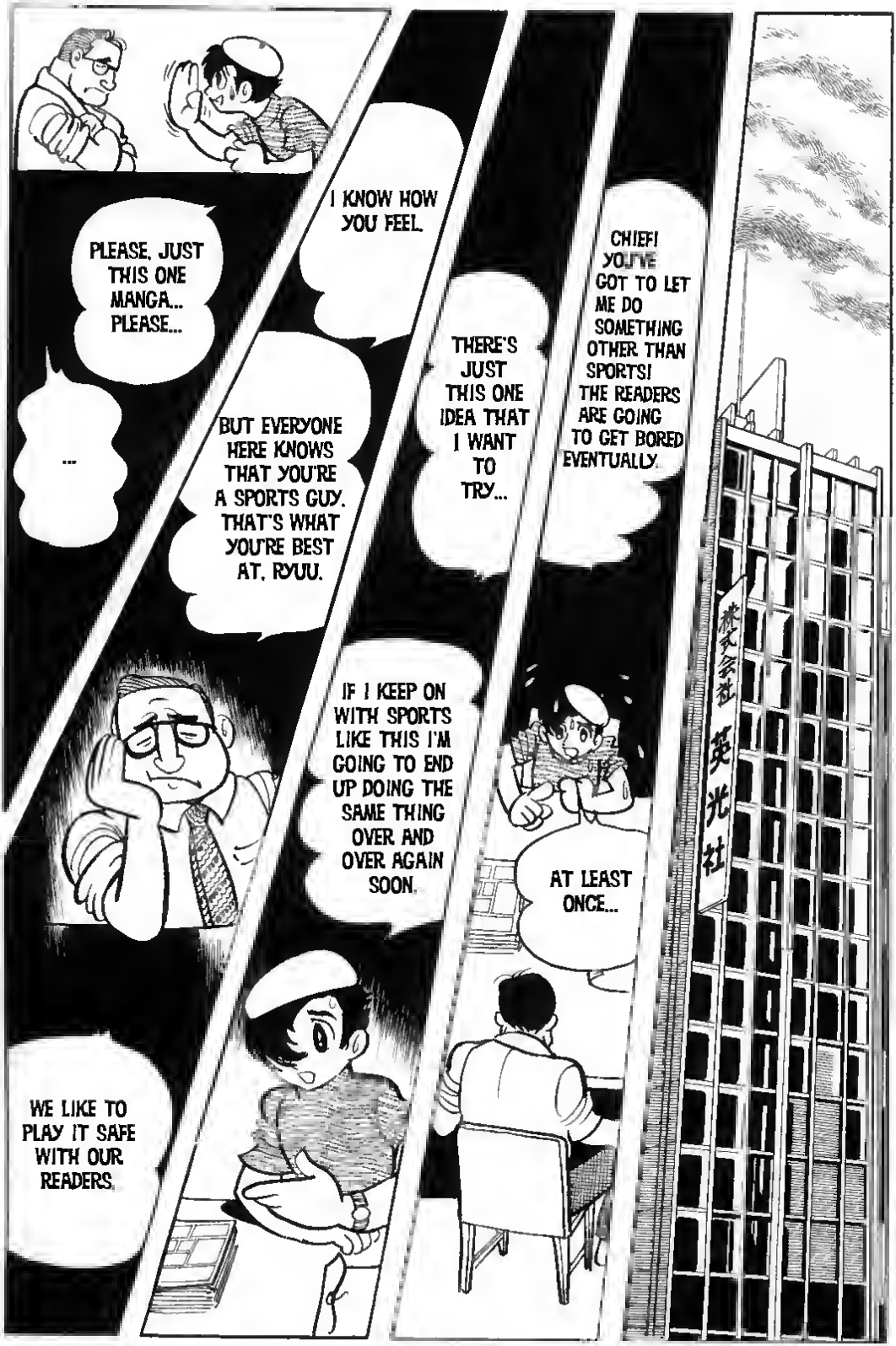
I STARTED ON THAT PATH FIVE YEARS AGO.
MY NAME IS RYUUICHI KUMA. I'M A MANGA ARTIST.
I GUESS I FEEL CONFIDENT EITHER WAY. BUT...
I HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE.
BUT SHOULD I GO TO COLLEGE? I HAD NO IDEA.
I LIKED MANGA...
AFTER I GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL, I COULDN'T DECIDE WHAT I SHOULD DO.

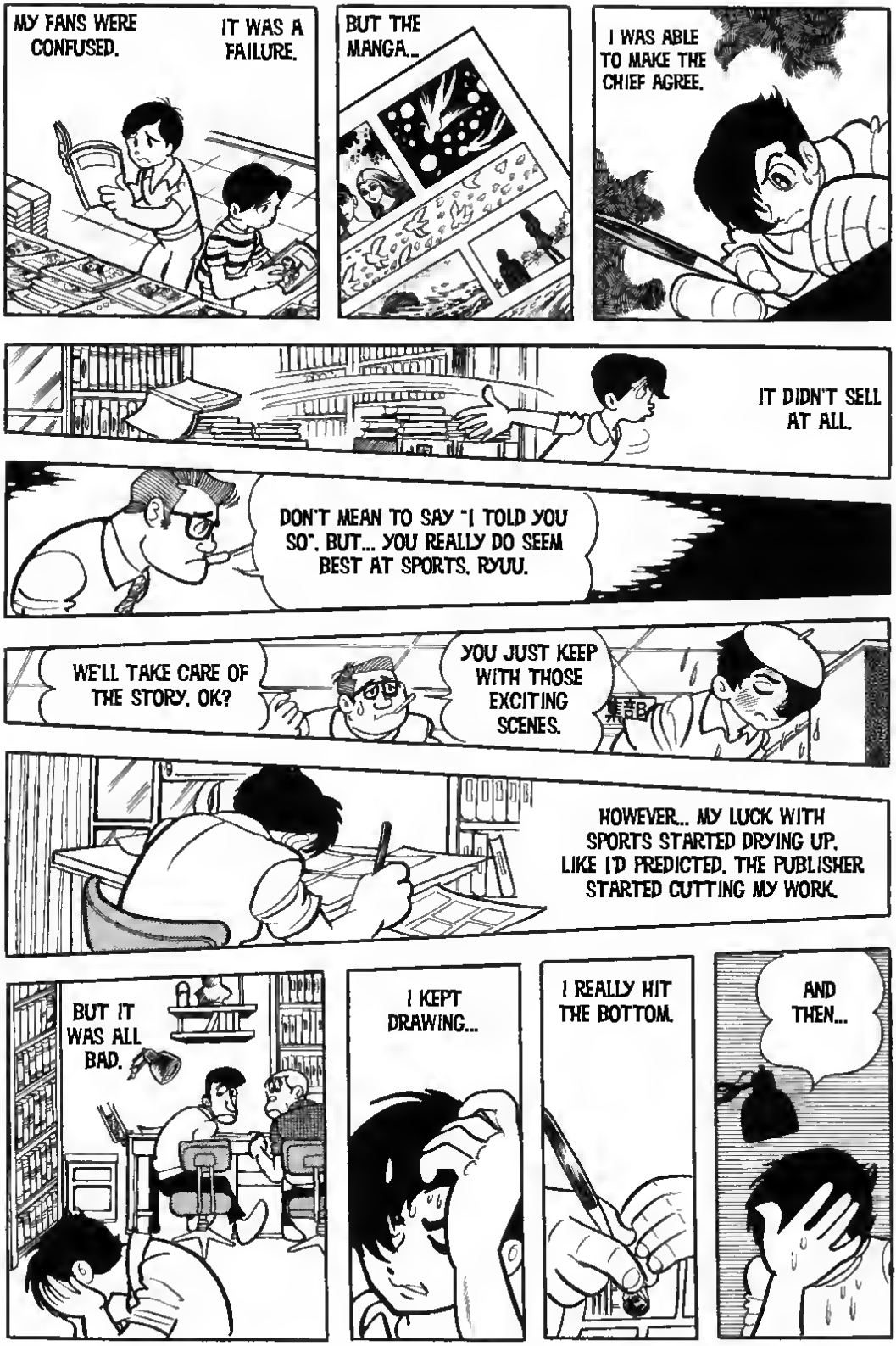
MOM AND DAD TELL ME I NEED TO STAY IN SCHOOL...
WHILE MY FRIENDS...
SAY I SHOULD TRY TO PURSUE MANGA.
TIMES LIKE THESE...
IT'S BEST TO LEAVE THE DECISION TO THE FLIP OF A COIN. RYUUICHI.
WHO ARE...?
I JUST HAPPEN TO HAVE A COIN HERE. WE'LL SAY BLACK MEANS MANGA AND WHITE MEANS COLLEGE...
BUT MA'AM. HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME...?
I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU. YOU KNOW...


FLIP THE COIN AND LET FATE DECIDE. BUT AFTER YOU'VE DONE SO, YOU MUSTN'T REGRET YOUR DECISION.
BLACK MEANS MANGA...
CONGRATULATIONS. I'M SURE YOU'LL BE A WONDERFUL MANGA ARTIST.
BLACK...!!
RETURN TO OCTAGON MANOR. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO CHANGE TO THE PATH OF A DIFFERENT DESTINY.
BUT SHE WAS ABLE TO TELL HOW WORRIED I WAS FROM THE LOOK ON MY FACE.
WELL... IF IT EVER SO HAPPENS THAT YOU SHOULD DOUBT THE DECISION... THAT YOU SHOULD WANT TO STOP BEING A MANGA ARTIST...


COME THEN AND YOU WILL KNOW. YOU WILL FIND A DIFFERENT DESTINY... BUT ONLY ONCE.
WHAT WOULD HAVE BECOME OF YOU IF YOU HADN'T CHOSEN MANGA?
CHANGE... DESTINY?
EACH DIFFERS SLIGHTLY...
RYUUICHI... THIS UNIVERSE IS FULL OF MANY WORLDS.
YOU'RE TALKING LIKE THIS IS SOME SCI-FI COMIC!
THERE IS A WORLD VERY SIMILAR TO THIS ONE EXCEPT THAT BRIDGE... THERE ARE SOME WORLDS JUST LIKE HERE ONLY THEY HAVE NO TRAINS...
IF YOU WERE TO REGRET THE SWITCH, EVEN A SMALL FRACTION... YOU MAY BE RIPPED INTO TWO. BE CAREFUL!
BUT I WILL WARN YOU... ONCE YOU SWITCH YOU MUST FORGET ABOUT MANGA ENTIRELY.
YOU JUST HAVE TO SWITCH YOUR MIND TO THAT OF A DIFFERENT WORLD.

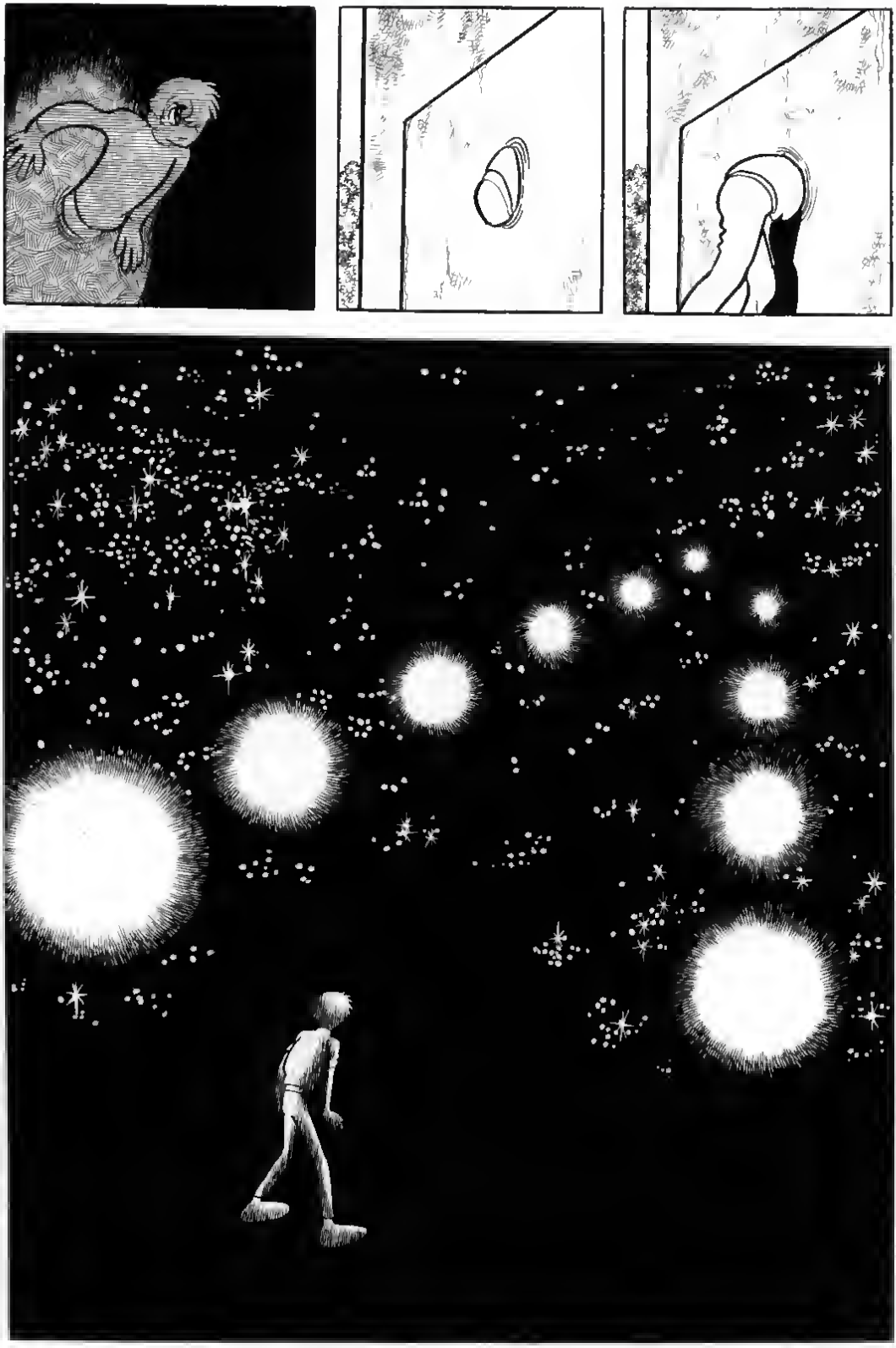

BUT WHERE?! WHERE IS OCTAGON MANOR?
FAREWELL.
THEY WILL SHOW YOU THE WAY...
KEEP GOING WEST UNTIL YOU SEE ROAD SIGNS THAT ARE COMPLETELY BLACK.
I GAVE UP ON GOING TO COLLEGE AND STARTED DRAWING. STRANGELY, I SOON MET WITH A GOOD DEAL OF SUCCESS...
I HAD TEN SERIES... AND TWO ASSISSTANTS.

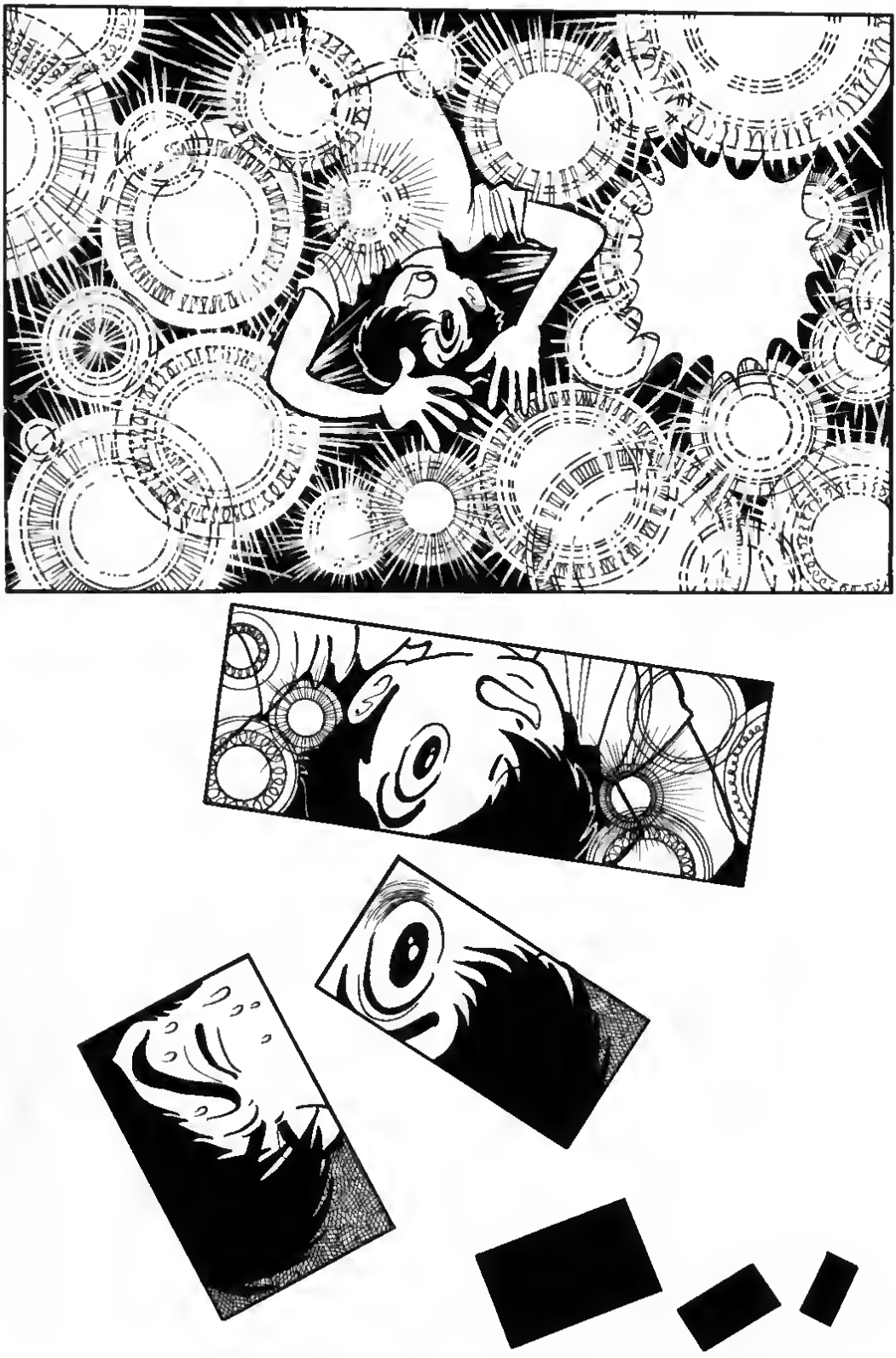

CHIEF! YOU'VE GOT TO LET ME DO SOMETHING OTHER THAN SPORTS! THE READERS ARE GOING TO GET BORED EVENTUALLY.
株式会社 英光社
THERE'S JUST THIS ONE IDEA THAT I WANT TO TRY...
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL.
PLEASE, JUST THIS ONE MANGA... PLEASE...
...
AT LEAST ONCE...
BUT EVERYONE HERE KNOWS THAT YOU'RE A SPORTS GUY. THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE BEST AT, RYUU.
IF I KEEP ON WITH SPORTS LIKE THIS I'M GOING TO END UP DOING THE SAME THING OVER AND OVER AGAIN SOON.
WE LIKE TO PLAY IT SAFE WITH OUR READERS.


MY FANS WERE CONFUSED.
IT WAS A FAILURE.
BUT THE MANGA...
I WAS ABLE TO MAKE THE CHIEF AGREE.
IT DIDN'T SELL AT ALL.
DON'T MEAN TO SAY "I TOLD YOU SO". BUT... YOU REALLY DO SEEM BEST AT SPORTS, RYUU.
WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THE STORY, OK?
YOU JUST KEEP WITH THOSE EXCITING SCENES.
HOWEVER... MY LUCK WITH SPORTS STARTED DRYING UP. LIKE I'D PREDICTED, THE PUBLISHER STARTED CUTTING MY WORK.
BUT IT WAS ALL BAD.
I KEPT DRAWING...
I REALLY HIT THE BOTTOM.
AND THEN...

ALL THE READERS WANT IS FAN SERVICE! THE PUBLISHERS JUST WANT MONEY...!!
I HATE MANGA!
I WAS LOST.
THE JOY I ONCE HAD DRAWING WAS GONE.
THAT OLD LADY... I JUST REMEMBERED HER FROM FIVE YEARS AGO. SHE'S WHY I STARTED MANGA!
SOMETHING ABOUT SOME PLACE CALLED "OCTAGON MANOR", TOO...
BUT I'M AT LEAST CURIOUS.
I DON'T EXACTLY BELIEVE HER...
AND HEADED WEST, LIKE SHE HAD SAID.
SO I JUMPED IN MY CAR...

ONE HERE TOO!
AND I FOUND IT! A BLACK SIGN.
AT THE HOUSE THAT CAN CHANGE MY FATE...
HERE I AM.
BUT WHERE'S THE ENTRANCE ...?
MY HAND ...!
WHY'S THIS STICKING OUT HERE...?



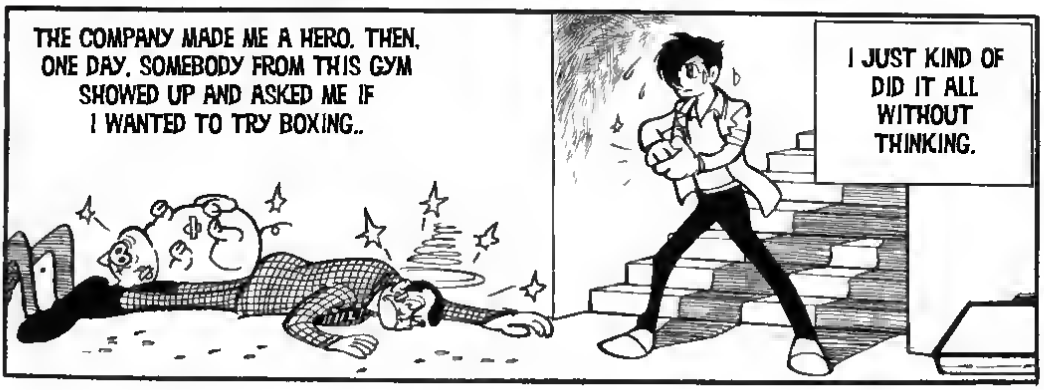


8... 9... 10!!!
RYUUICHI KUMA!!

WE WANTED TO KNOW IF YOU'D LET US DO AN INTERVIEW ...
MR. KUMA...
DID YOU WANT TO BE A BOXER EVER SINCE YOU WERE A KID?
GO AHEAD.
DON'T FORGET YOU'VE GOT THE CHAMPIONSHIP COMING UP!
DON'T WAS YOUR TIME WITH THESE KIDS, KUMA!
BUT THEY'RE MY FANS! JUST A FEW MINUTES WON'T HURT.
CAN YOU DRAW?
MANGA ?!
REALLY, I WANTED TO BE A MANGA ARTIST.
(THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE TOLD ANYONE...)
WELL, I'VE ALWAYS LIKED SPORTS BUT...
RIGHT WHEN I WAS GOING HOME...
BUT ONE NIGHT ...
I CAN'T SAY I'M A GOOD ARTIST... I JUST LIKED IT. BUT MY MOTHER TOLD ME TO GO TO COLLEGE INSTEAD, AND AFTER I GRADUATED, I STARTED WORKING AT THIS BIG COMPANY.

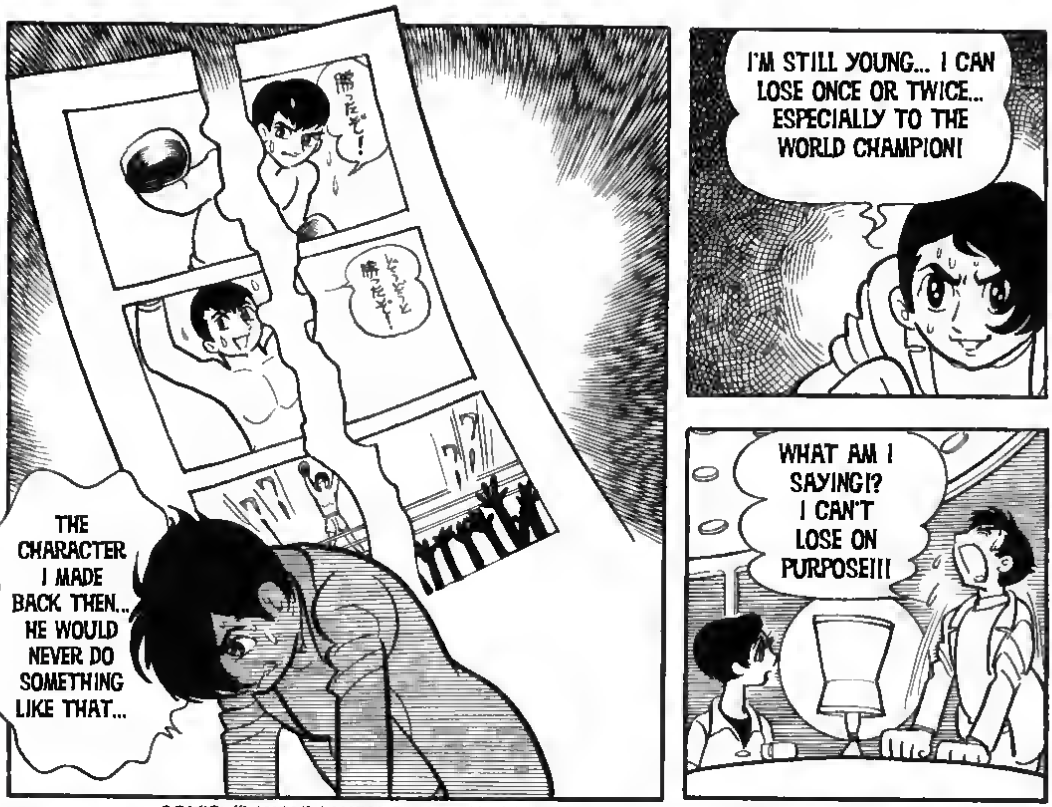
I FOUND MYSELF IN THE MIDDLE OF... THIS!
G'NIGHT ...?!
I CAN SHOW YOU... BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW TO OPEN IT.
TELL US WHERE THE SAFE IS, KID.
DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT. JUST SHOW US.
I WAITED UNTIL WE GOT TO THE STAIRS, THEN...
I DIDN'T ARGUE ANY MORE THAN THAT, SO I COULD TRY TO TAKE THEM OFF GUARD...

TEXT: (MARTIAL ARTS) MASTER


THE COMPANY MADE ME A HERO. THEN, ONE DAY, SOMEBODY FROM THIS GYM SHOWED UP AND ASKED ME IF I WANTED TO TRY BOXING..
I JUST KIND OF DID IT ALL WITHOUT THINKING.

I THINK WE FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT YOU, MR. KUMA. LIKE YOU'RE A HERO!
WHENEVER WE WATCH YOU IN A MATCH...
FOR FUN YOU KNOW, I USED TO DRAW THIS SPORTS MANGA ABOUT THIS HERO WHO WOULD ALWAYS FIGHT TO THE END, FOR WHAT WAS RIGHT...
DESTINY IS A FUNNY THING ...
I'LL SAVE UP MY ENERGY FOR NOW. I'LL TRAIN WHEN I TRAIN. DON'T WORRY.
YOU'RE ALREADY HEADING OUT? WHAT ABOUT TRAINING?
ANYTHING ELSE?
INSTEAD OF VICE VERSA!
WELL I GUESS MY MANGA WAS MY MODEL.
NO, THANK YOU.
SORRY, AM I LATE?
NO, NOT AT ALL ...
THE MAIN CHARACTER FROM MY MANGA ALWAYS FOUGHT FAIR. THAT'S HOW HE BECOMES THE CHAMPION! NO TRICKS.
THAT'S HOW I'LL DO IT TOO!
HE SAID ...
WHAT DID YOUR FATHER SAY? ABOUT YOU AND ME...
YES... I'M FINE.
YOU SEEM DOWN... ARE YOU OK?

NO! YOU CAN'T ...
HE JUST NEEDS ME TO TALK TO HIM! I'LL...!
HE SAID NO.
AND THE HEAD OF THAT COMPANY HAPPENS TO BE A FAN OF FRANK MORRISON...
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT... JUST, MY FATHER WORKS FOR AN AMERICAN COMPANY. YOU KNOW ...
WHY CAN'T I... WHAT DOES YOUR FATHER NOT LIKE ABOUT ME?
AND IF YOU WERE TO MARRY ME... MY FATHER IS WORRIED THAT... HIS JOB WOULD BE IN DANGER.
IF YOU WERE TO WIN AGAINST FRANK... RIGHT. I'M SURE MY FATHER'S BOSS WOULD BE UPSET.
FRANK MORRISON...! THE WORLD CHAMPION... MY NEXT OPPONENT!
YOUR DAD'S BOSS WOULDN'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM WITH THAT. RIGHT...? IF I JUST LOST...
OR... THAT YOU WANT ME TO LOSE...?
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY? THAT'S...! THAT THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN MARRY?!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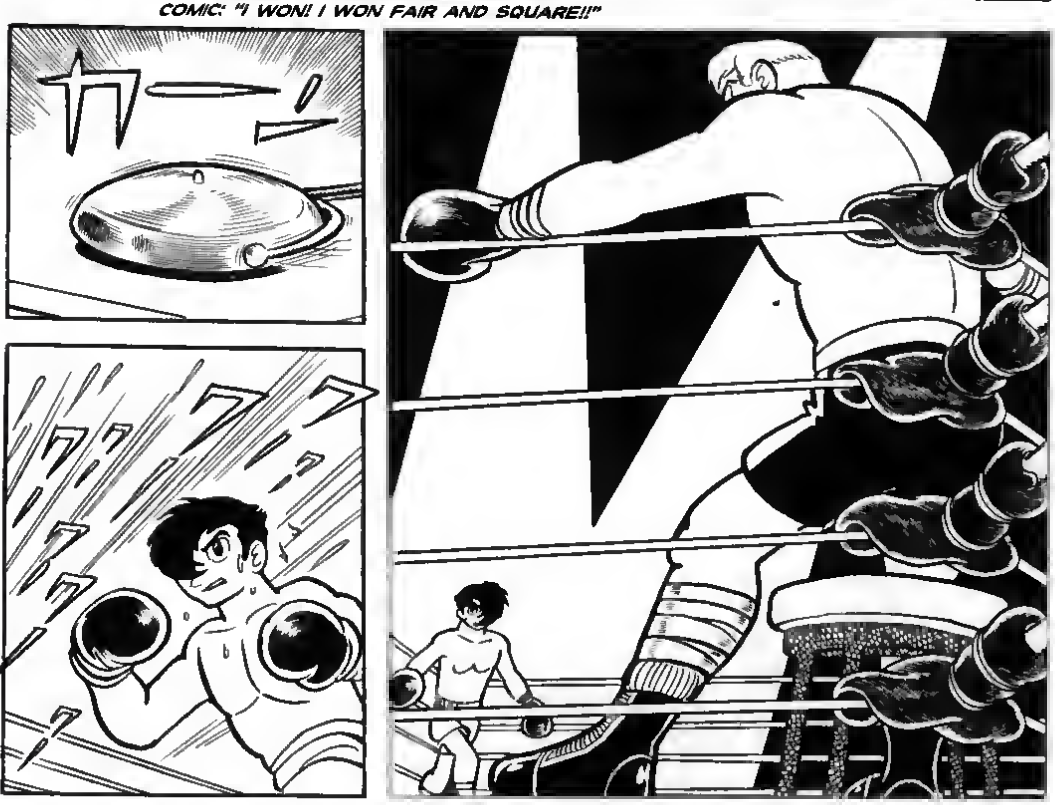
THE CHARACTER I MADE BACK THEN... HE WOULD NEVER DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
I'M STILL YOUNG... I CAN LOSE ONCE OR TWICE... ESPECIALLY TO THE WORLD CHAMPION!
WHAT AM I SAYING!? I CAN'T LOSE ON PURPOSE!!!

COMIC: "I WON! I WON FAIR AND SQUARE!!"

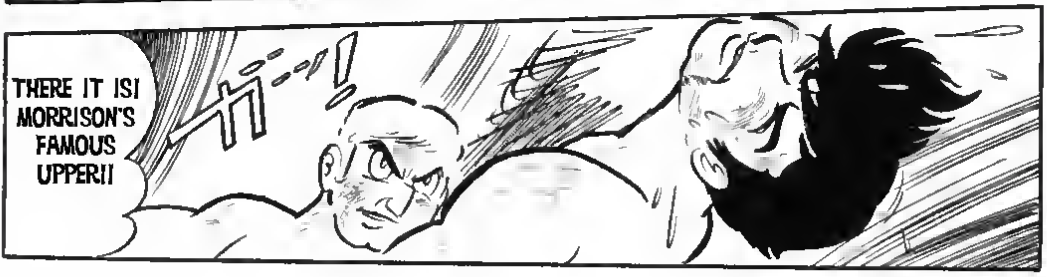


COULD IT BE POSSIBLE THAT WE'RE LOOKING AT A NEW WORLD CHAMPION ...?!
WELL LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... WE'RE ENTERING THE FINAL ROUND. RYUUICHI KUMA IS STILL MAINTAINING THE LEAD...
I'LL FIGHT FAIR! I HAVE TO! JUST LIKE I TOLD THOSE KIDS...
ドゴッ!!
JUST THIS ONCE....
ALRIGHT ...
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?! YOU CAN DODGE THAT!!

RYUU! STAND UP AND FIGHT!
FRANK...
KUMA IS TAKING HIT AFTER HIT...!!
I...

WE'RE CHEERING FOR YOU!
YOU'RE LIKE OUR HERO, MR. KUMA.

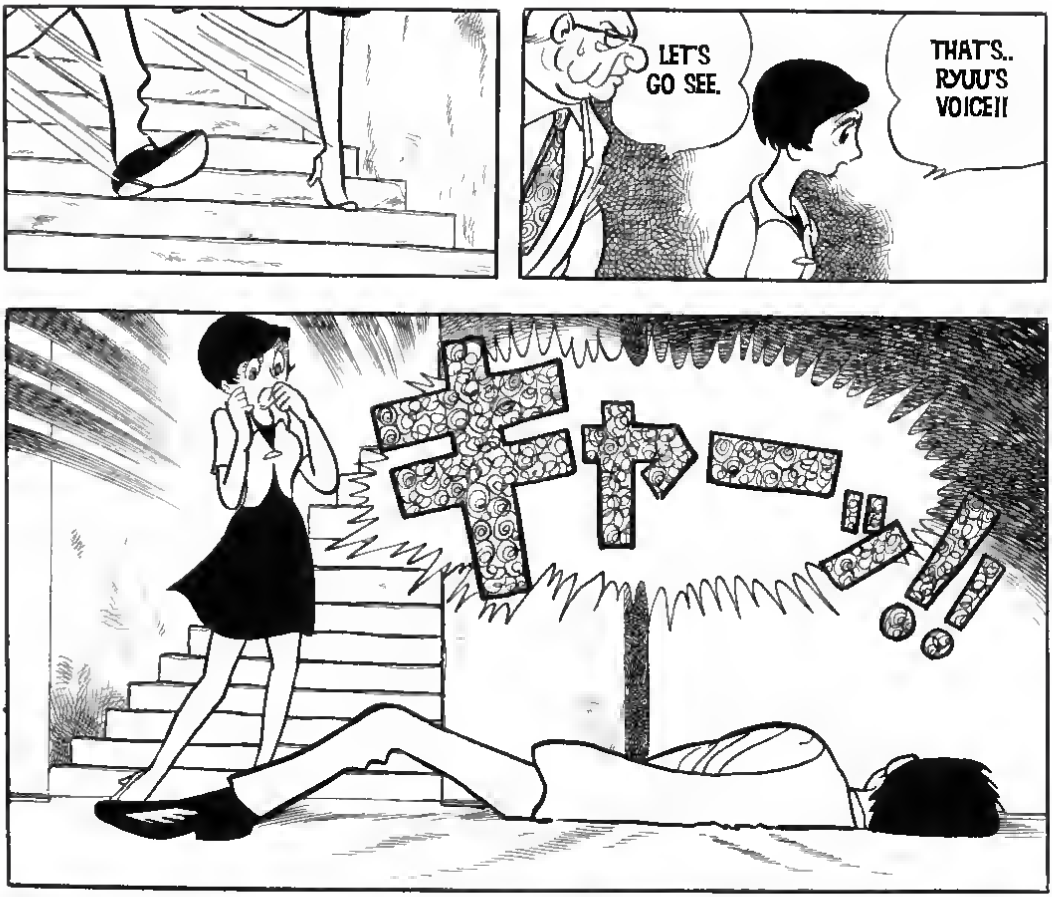
A CLENCH! BOTH OPPONENTS SEEM AT THEIR LIMIT...


THERE IT IS! MORRISON'S FAMOUS UPPER!!

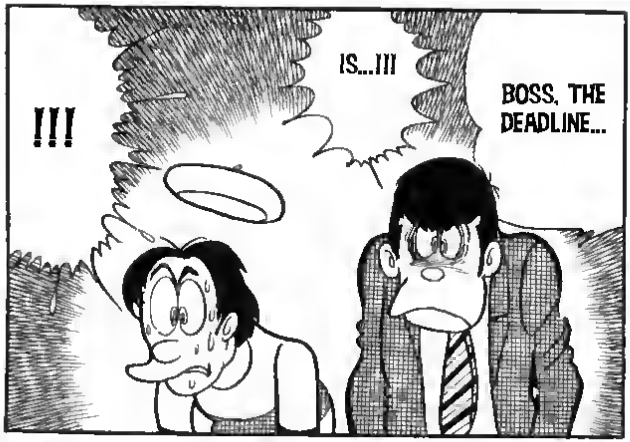
JUST LIKE YOU WANTED...
NOW WE CAN GET MARRIED... AND THEN I'LL JUST CHALLENGE FRANK AGAIN! AND...
LISTEN TO ME! I SOUND LIKE I'M SCHEMING SOMETHING...

YOU'LL HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE.
DON'T BE HARD ON YOURSELF.
NOW I'LL FINALLY BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU THAT POSITION AT THE NEW COMPANY...
THE BOSS WILL DEFINITELY BE PLEASED.
I'VE BEEN TALKING TO THE BOSS' SON ABOUT MARRIAGE, AS WELL..
THAT KUMA... I CAN'T BELIEVE HE BOUGHT IT!
HAHA... I JUST TOLD HIM THAT WE COULDN'T GET MARRIED UNLESS HE LOST!
RITSUKO! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU GOT KUMA TO LOSE...

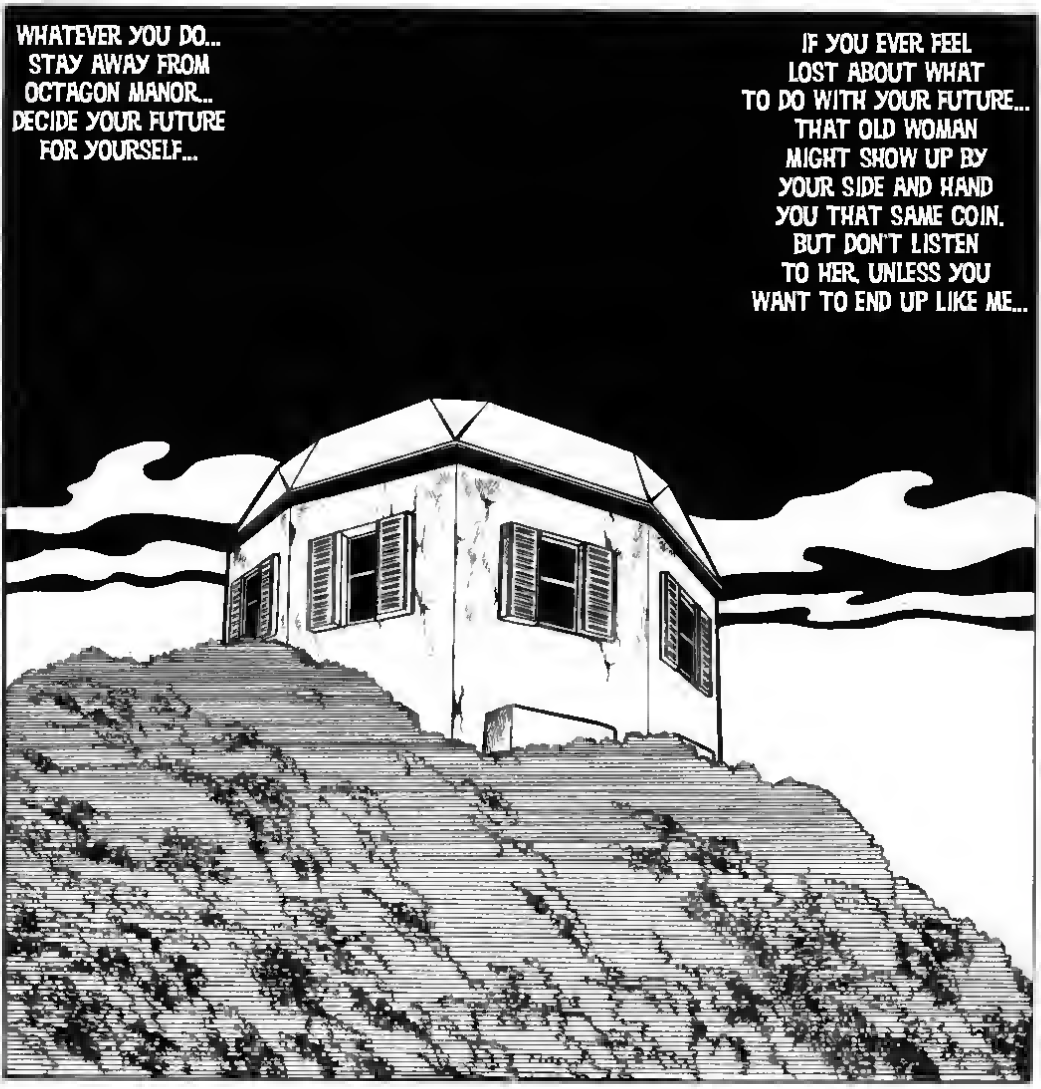
SO THAT'S HOW IT IS...
YOUR PASSPORT WILL BE READY IN TWO WEEKS.
SO, WHEN CAN I GET OUT OF JAPAN?
OK... I JUST HOPE I DON'T RUN INTO RYUU UNTIL THEN...
I WISH ...
I WISH I HAD NEVER BECAME A BOXER...
I'M A SELLOUT! WHAT HAVE I DONE!?
I...
I WANT TO GO BACK! I WANT TO DRAW MANGA!
I'M SURE I WOULD'VE MADE GOOD MANGA...
I WISH I HAD JUST BECOME A MANGA ARTIST LIKE I WANTED TO. I LIKE KIDS...

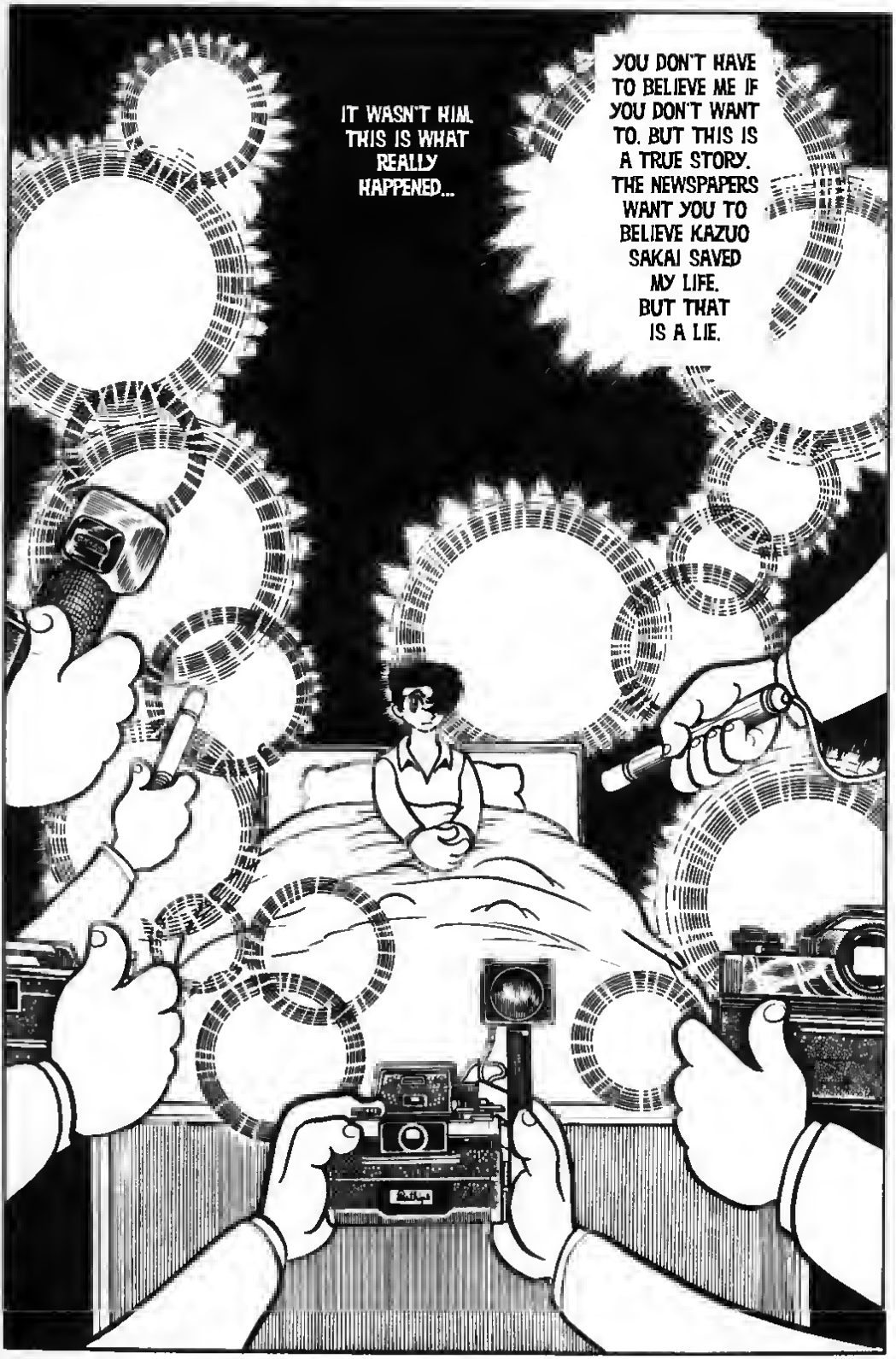


TEXT: SCREAMING



AND HALF OF IT REMAINED.
HALF OF MY BODY WENT BACK...


WHATEVER YOU DO... STAY AWAY FROM OCTAGON MANOR... DECIDE YOUR FUTURE FOR YOURSELF...
IF YOU EVER FEEL LOST ABOUT WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR FUTURE... THAT OLD WOMAN MIGHT SHOW UP BY YOUR SIDE AND HAND YOU THAT SAME COIN. BUT DON'T LISTEN TO HER, UNLESS YOU WANT TO END UP LIKE ME...


IT WASN'T HIM. THIS IS WHAT REALLY HAPPENED...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BELIEVE ME IF YOU DON'T WANT TO. BUT THIS IS A TRUE STORY. THE NEWSPAPERS WANT YOU TO BELIEVE KAZUO SAKAI SAVED MY LIFE. BUT THAT IS A LIE.

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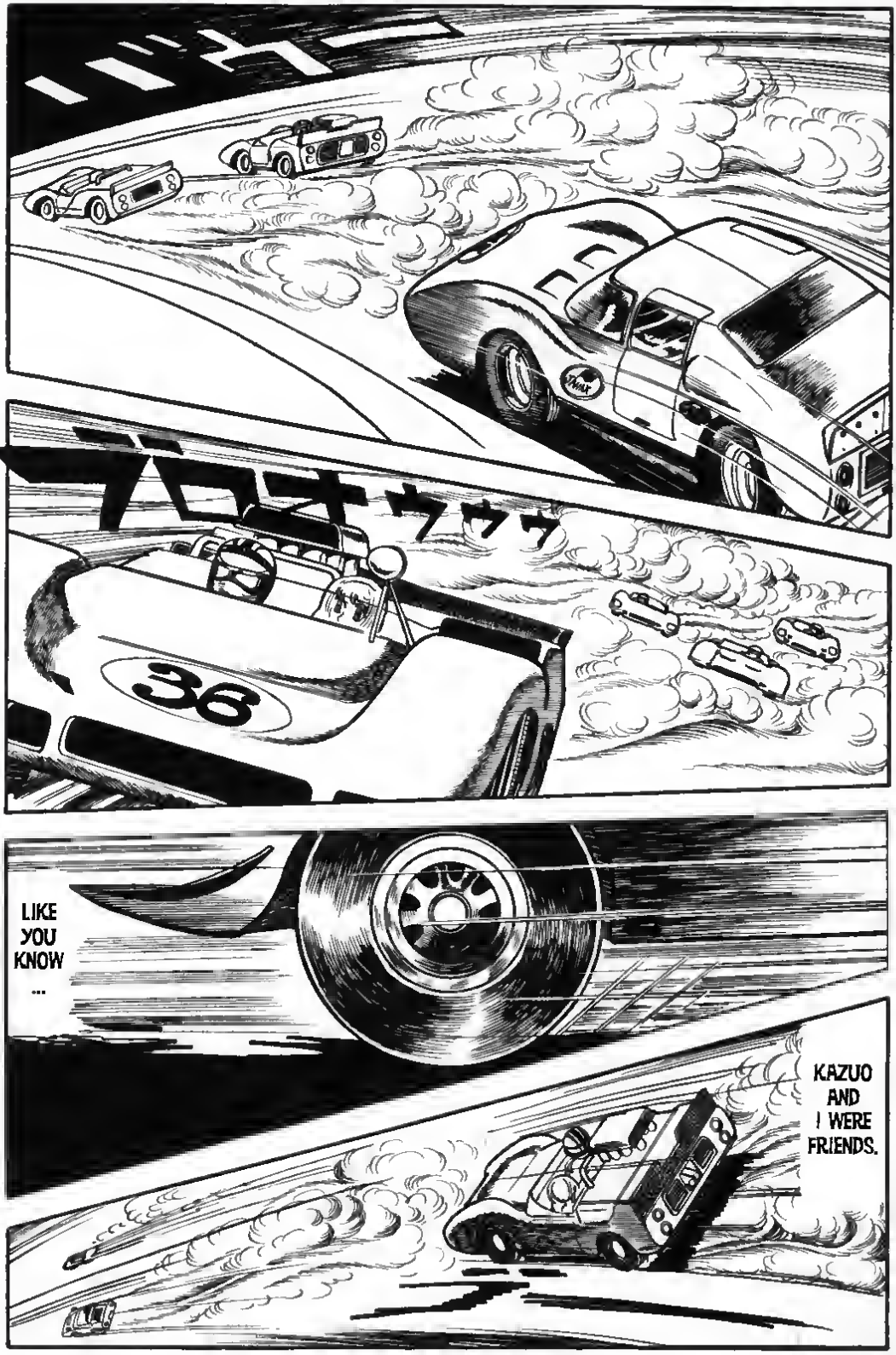
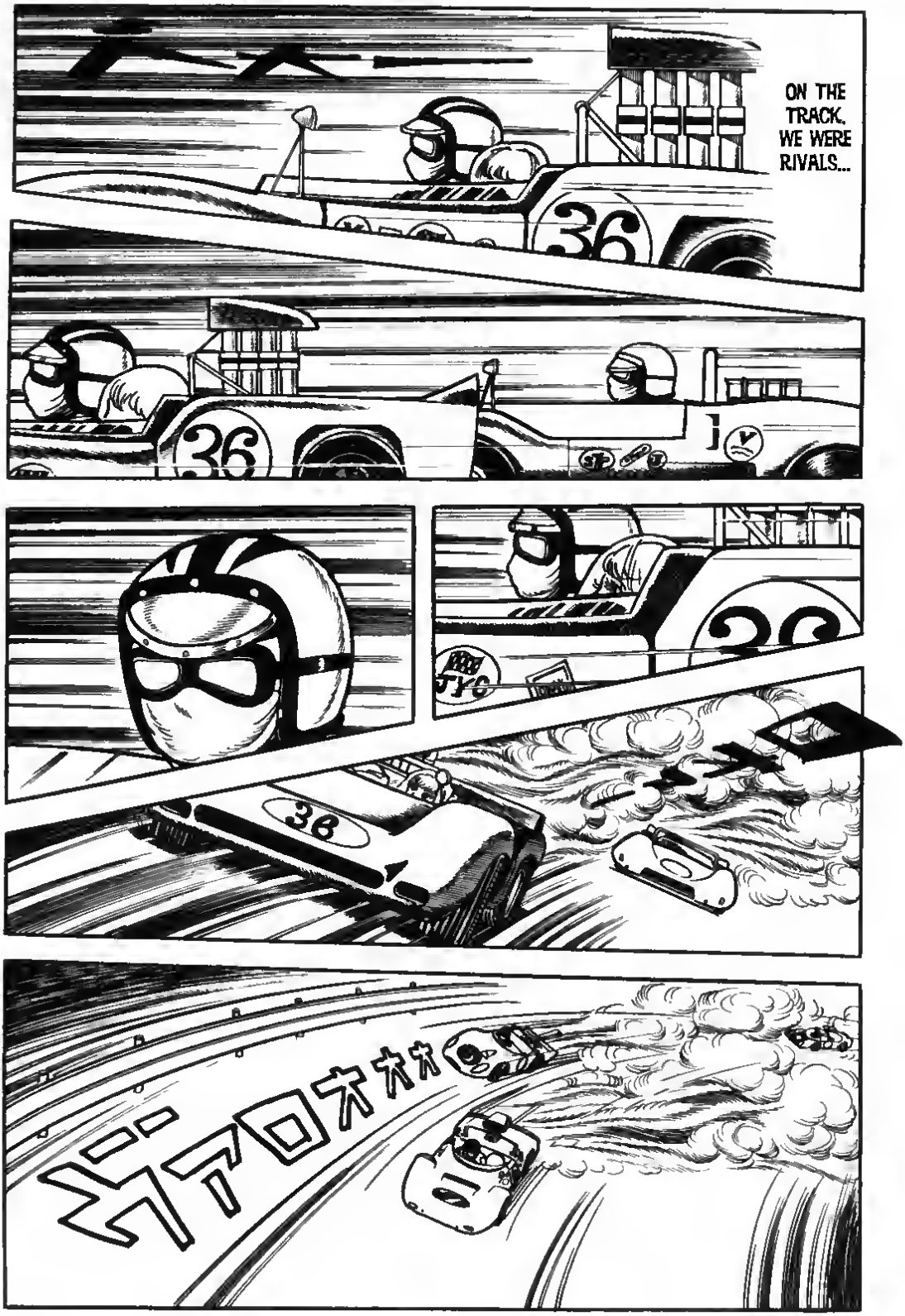

LIKE YOU KNOW ...
KAZUO AND I WERE FRIENDS.


ON THE TRACK, WE WERE RIVALS...
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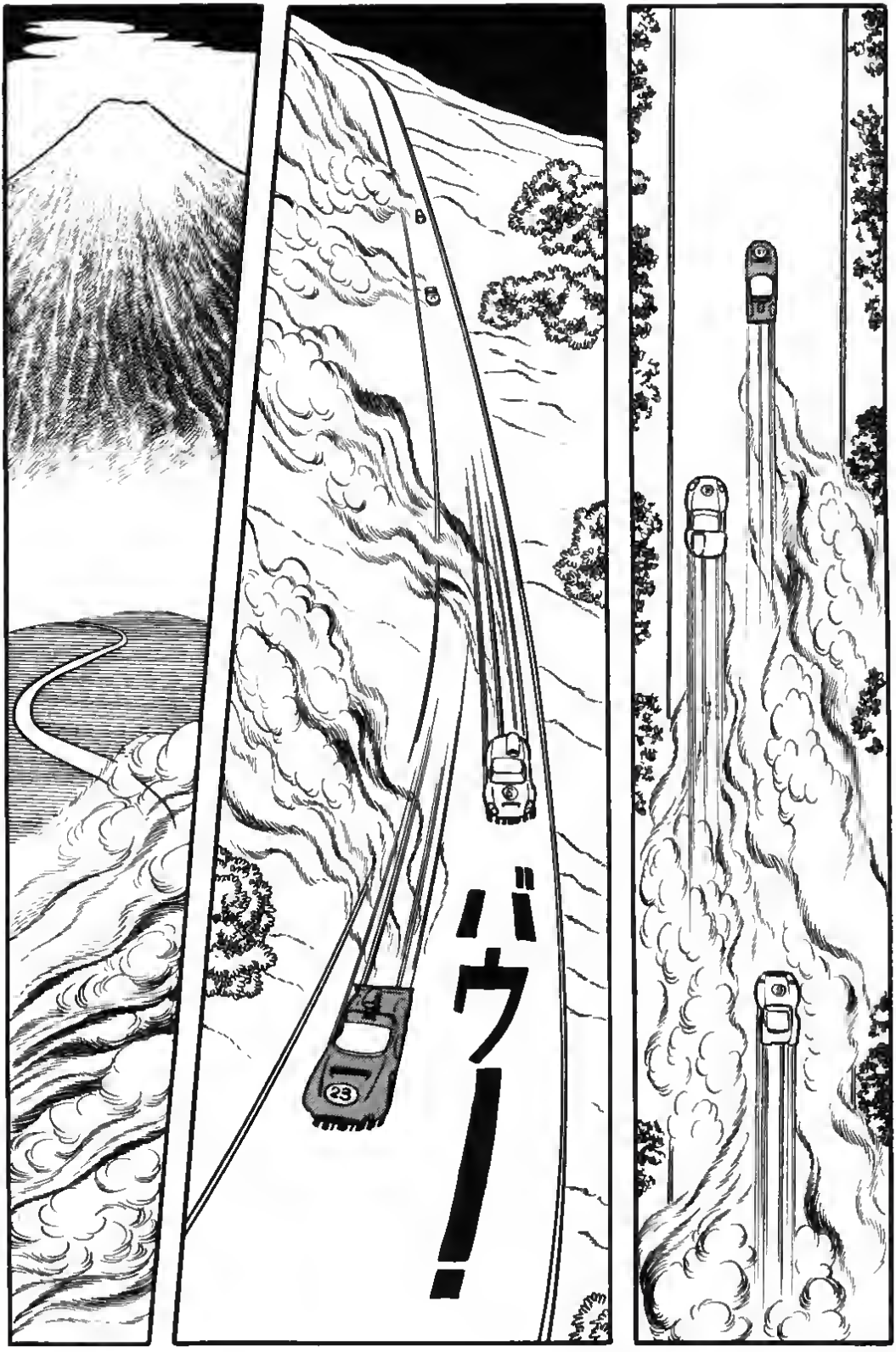
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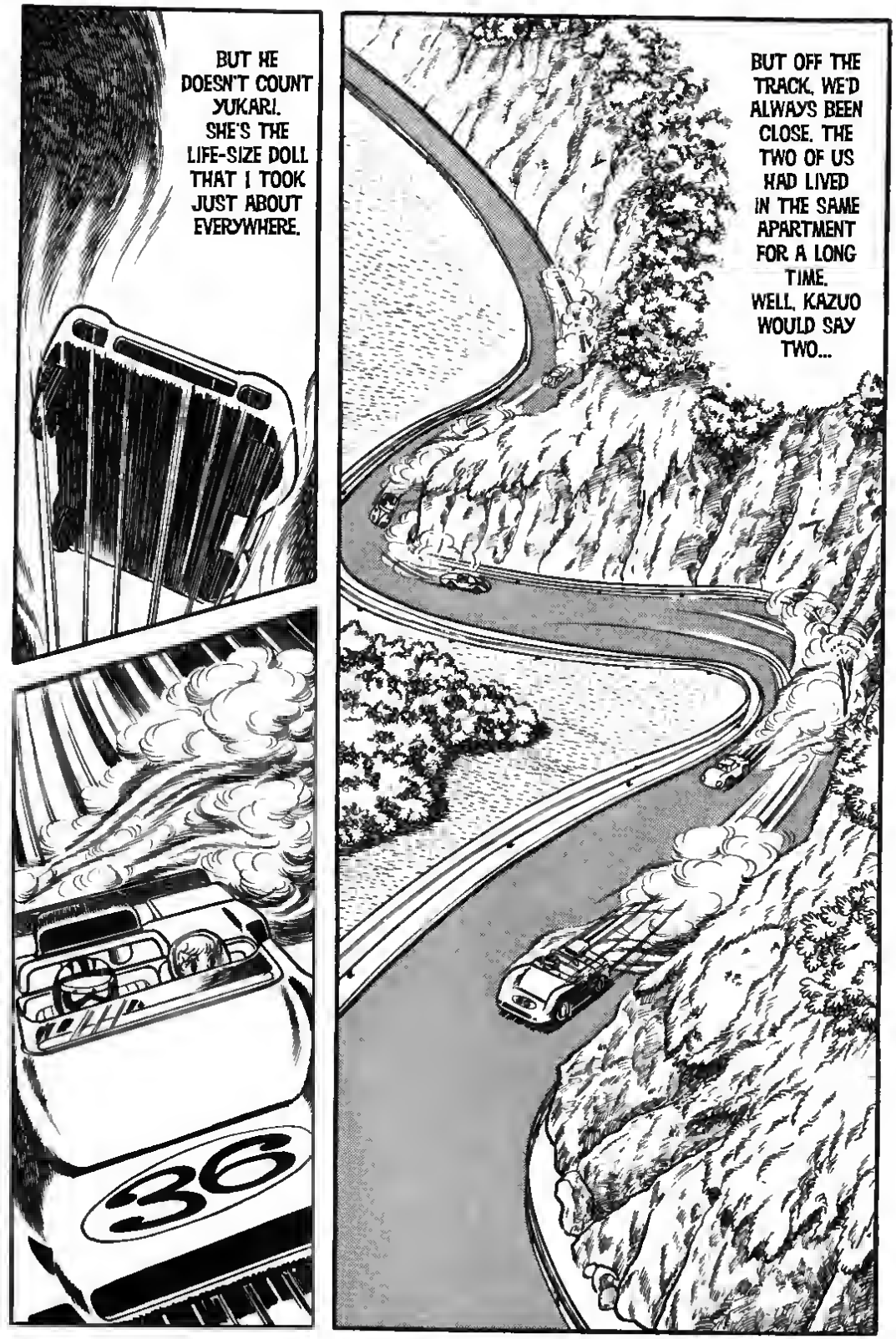
BUT HE DOESN'T COUNT YUKARI. SHE'S THE LIFE-SIZE DOLL THAT I TOOK JUST ABOUT EVERYWHERE.
BUT OFF THE TRACK, WE'D ALWAYS BEEN CLOSE. THE TWO OF US HAD LIVED IN THE SAME APARTMENT FOR A LONG TIME. WELL, KAZUO WOULD SAY TWO...
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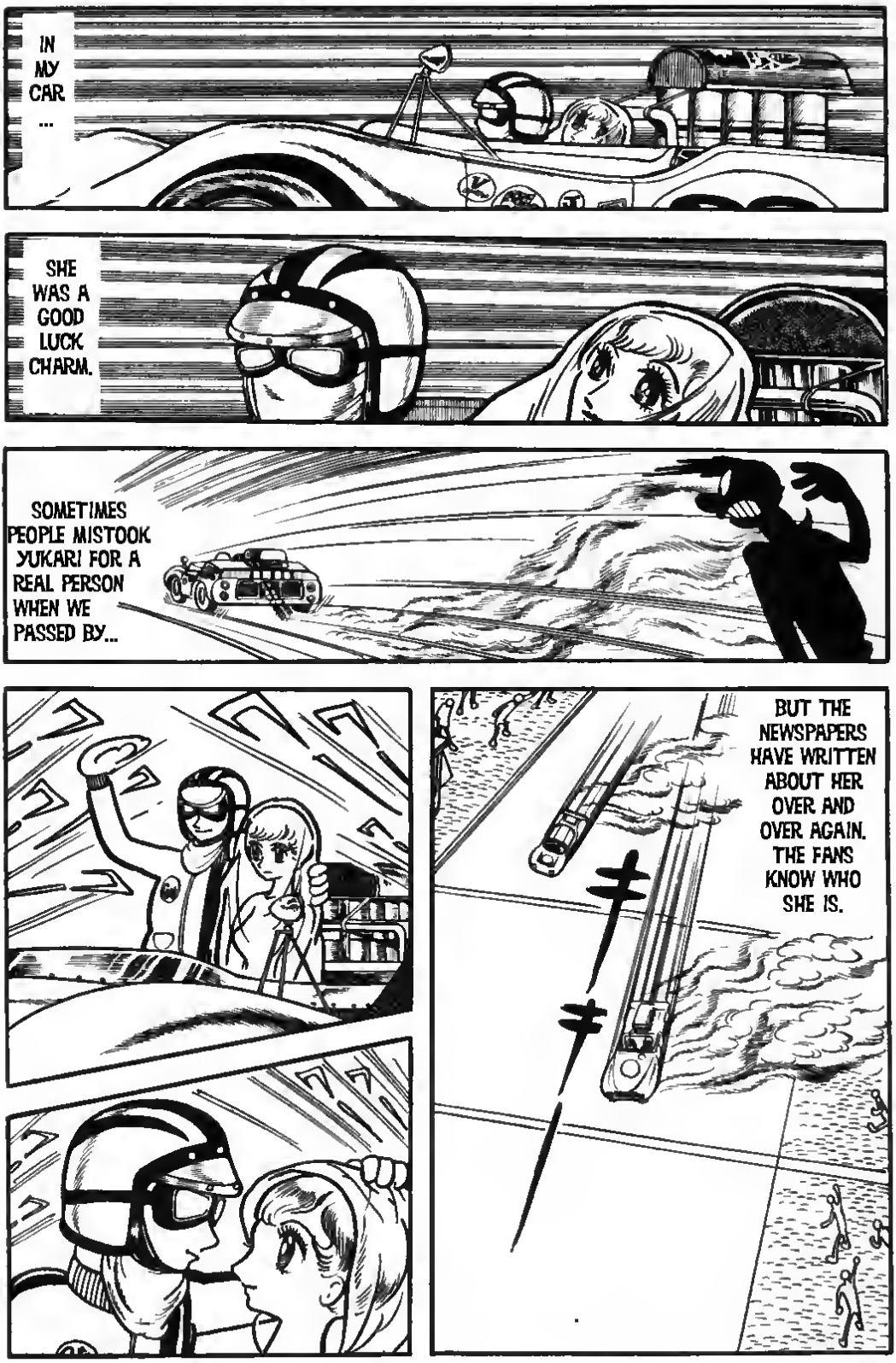
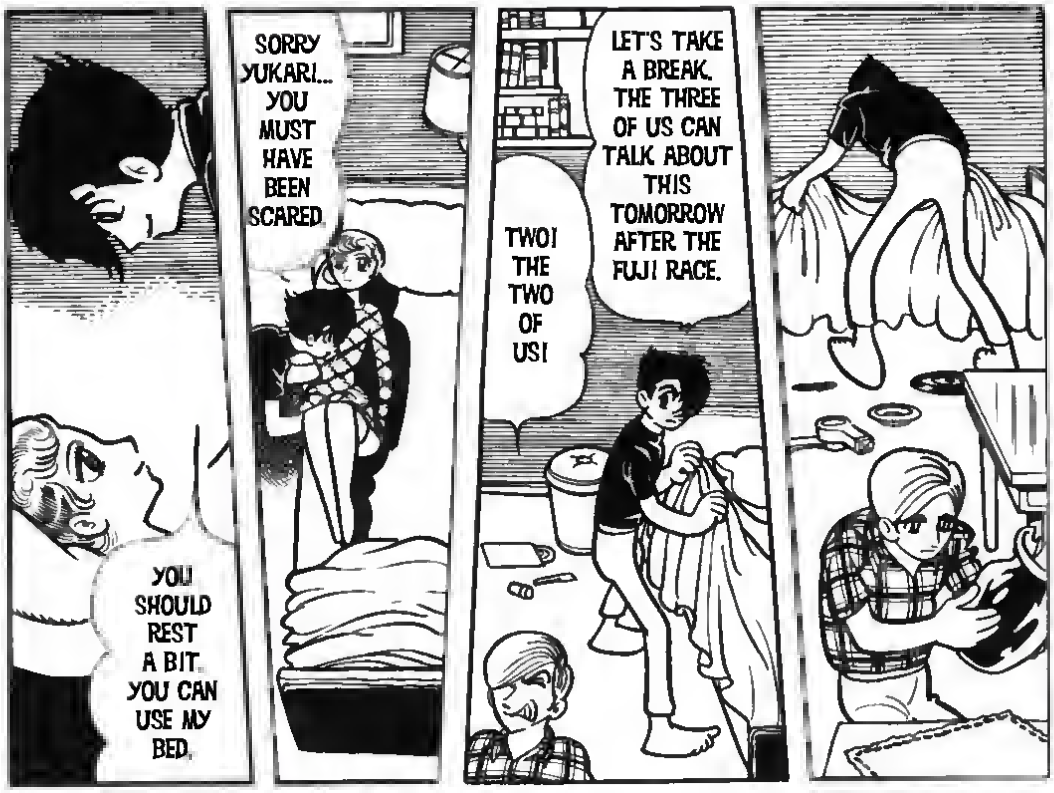
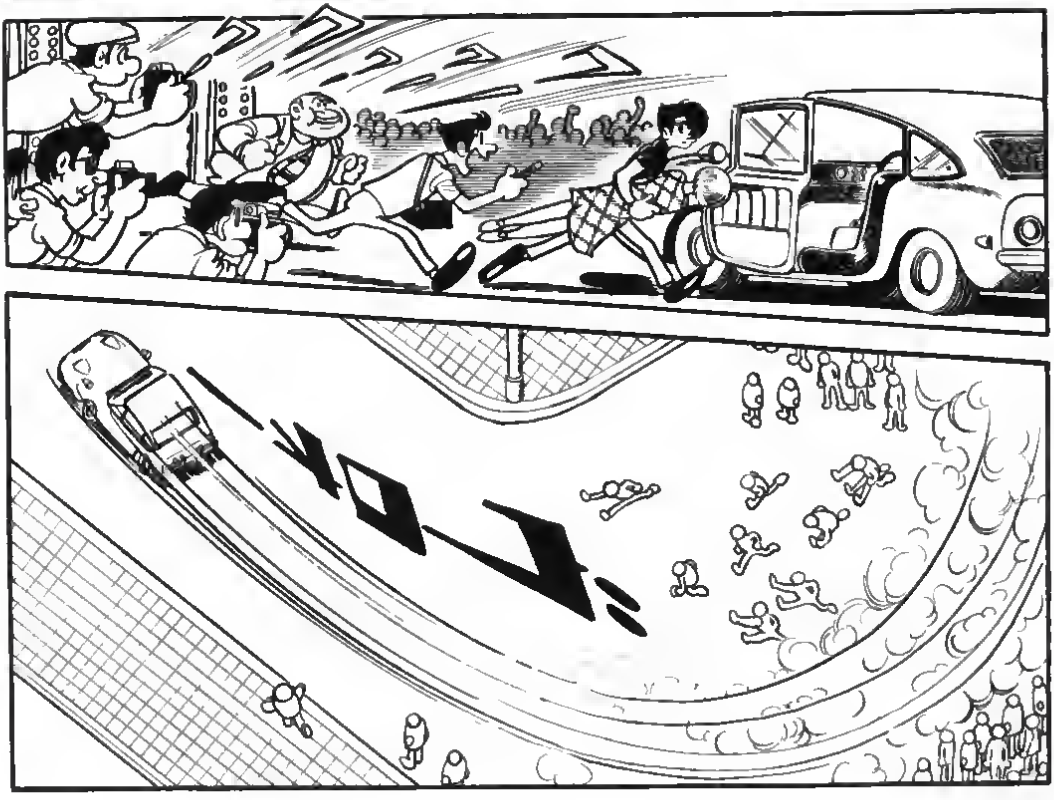

IN MY CAR ...
SHE WAS A GOOD LUCK CHARM.
SOMETIMES PEOPLE MISTOOK YUKARI FOR A REAL PERSON WHEN WE PASSED BY...
BUT THE NEWSPAPERS HAVE WRITTEN ABOUT HER OVER AND OVER AGAIN. THE FANS KNOW WHO SHE IS.

SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL TO ME. ESPECIALLY THE SOFT LOOK IN HER EYES.
YUKARI AND I WERE NEVER APART. I LOVED HER AS IF SHE WERE HUMAN.
KAZUO COULDN'T STAND HER.
HE COMPLAINED ABOUT HER ALL THE TIME.
BUT EVER SINCE YUKARI CAME...
KAZUO AND I WERE FRIENDS SINCE COLLEGE.
KAZUO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING!
ONCE...

STOP !!
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO TO HER WITH THAT KNIFE!?
NO YOU WON'T!
I'M GONNA THROW HER OUT THE WINDOW!
I CAN'T CLEAN UP WITHOUT HER ALWAYS GETTING IN MY WAY!
THIS APARTMENT IS SMALL ENOUGH WITHOUT THAT THING TAKING SPACE!
I CAN'T TAKE HER BEING AROUND ANYMORE.

...AREN'T WE SUPPOSED TO BE FRIENDS? I THOUGHT YOU OF ALL PEOPLE WOULD UNDERSTAND...
KAZUO ...
WHY? ARE YOU JEALOUS OF US? ARE YOU TRYING TO SEPERATE YUKARI AND I?
WELL I DON'T. NOT ONE BIT...
YOU FIRST! AND TAKE YUKARI WITH YOU!
HOW ABOUT YOU JUST FIND SOME OTHER PLACE TO LIVE?


YOU SHOULD REST A BIT. YOU CAN USE MY BED.
SORRY YUKARI... YOU MUST HAVE BEEN SCARED.
TWO! THE TWO OF US!
LET'S TAKE A BREAK. THE THREE OF US CAN TALK ABOUT THIS TOMORROW AFTER THE FUJI RACE.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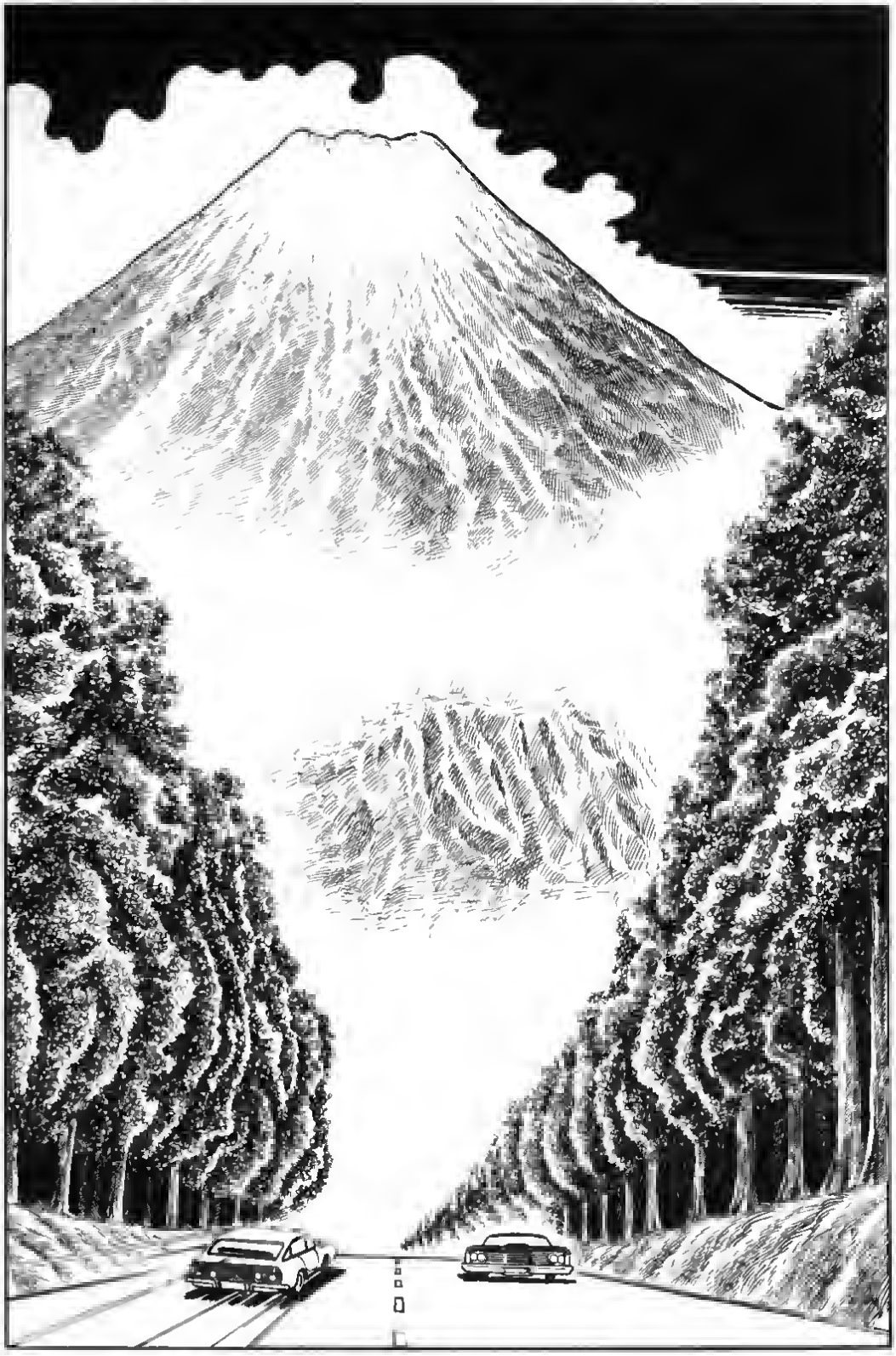


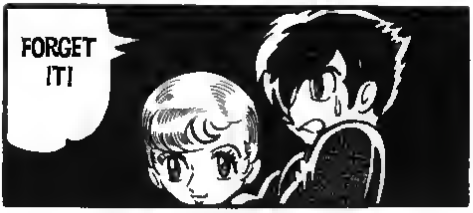
WIND CAVE
S, SORRY...
THE FANS AND PRESS WON'T BOTHER US HERE

OK. HERE'S GOOD. LET'S TALK ABOUT THIS.

JUST A LITTLE FURTHER... COME ON. IT'LL HELP COOL MY HEAD OFF A BIT.
HEY, DON'T YOU THINK WE'RE GOING IN A LITTLE TOO FAR? WE'RE GOING TO GET LOST!

GET RID OF THAT DOLL. I DON'T EVER WANT TO SEE IT AGAIN!

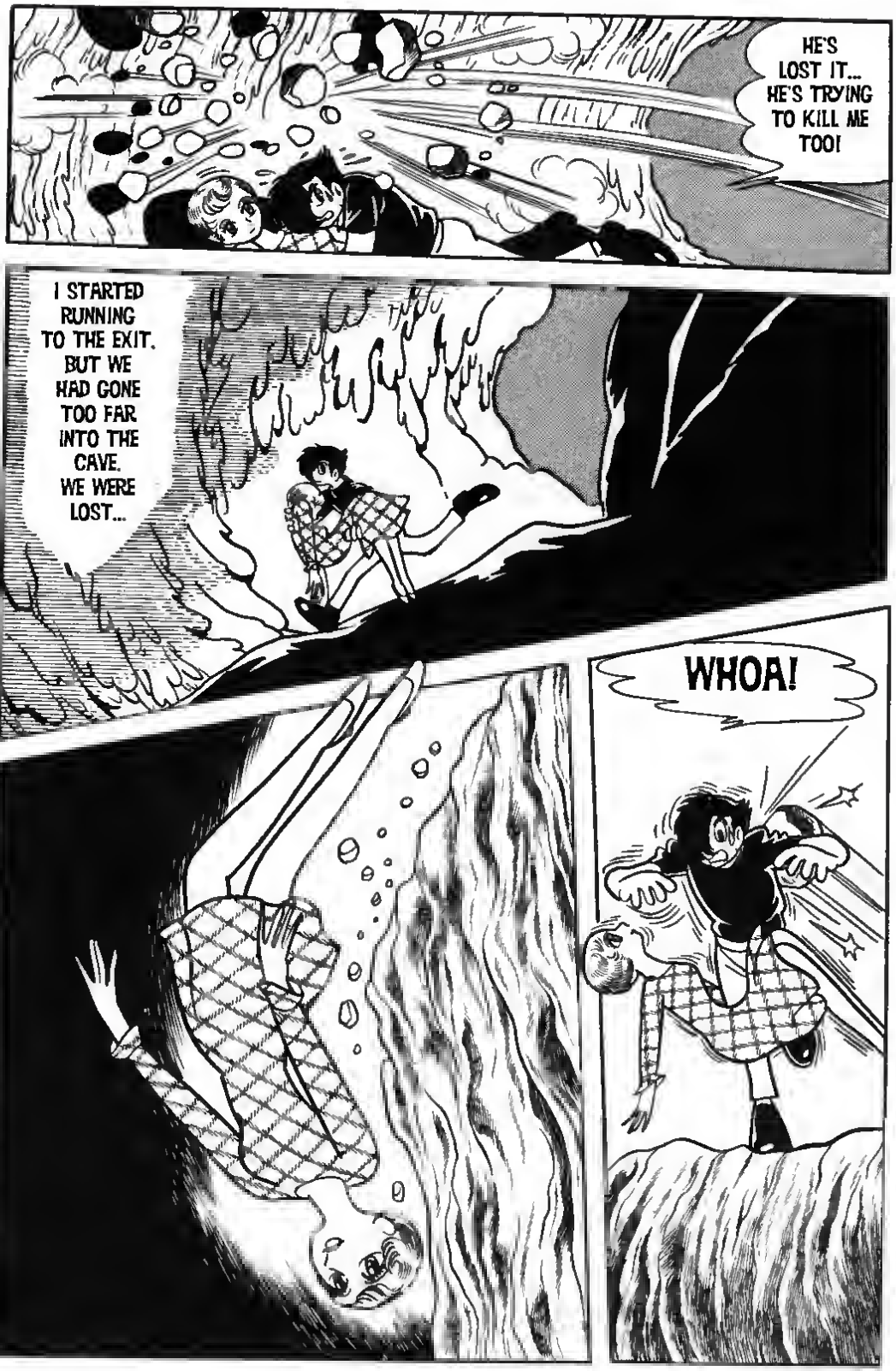
YOU'RE SCARED TO RACE ME MAN-TO-MAN, WITHOUT ANY TRICKS, AREN'T YOU!
YOU INTENTIONALLY RIDE WITH IT IN YOUR CAR TO DISTRACT ME!


FORGET IT!

THAT DOLL... ISN'T FAIR!

BACK IN COLLEGE, I TALKED ABOUT THIS WITH ONE OF MY PROFESSORS...
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY. YOU'RE JUST SCARED TO LOSE!
WHAT?! YOU THINK I'M JUST USING YUKARI TO WIN AGAINST YOU?!
THIS IS YOUR CHANCE! GET RID OF YUKARI HERE AND WE CAN FINALLY RACE AGAINST EACH OTHER FAIR AND SQUARE.
I CAN'T REACH MY FULL POTENTIAL!
HE SAID THAT I'M SO IRRITATED BY YOUR DOLL...
... I THOUGHT YOU'D SAY THAT...
NO!
I CAN'T! I NEED YUKARI! SHE'S MORE THAN JUST A DOLL TO ME!

WHAT ARE YOU...
I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO DO THIS THEN!
COME BACK!


HE'S LOST IT... HE'S TRYING TO KILL ME TOO!
I STARTED RUNNING TO THE EXIT. BUT WE HAD GONE TOO FAR INTO THE CAVE. WE WERE LOST...
WHOA!

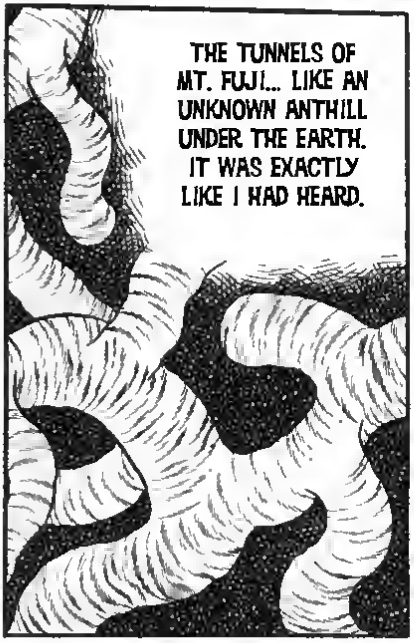
YUKARI!!!
YU-
OH NO!!
KAZUO... YOU...!
LOOKS LIKE A LONG WAY DOWN...
DO YOU HATE ME NOW? DO YOU WANT TO KILL ME? THAT'S OK. GO AHEAD. I WON'T STOP YOU.

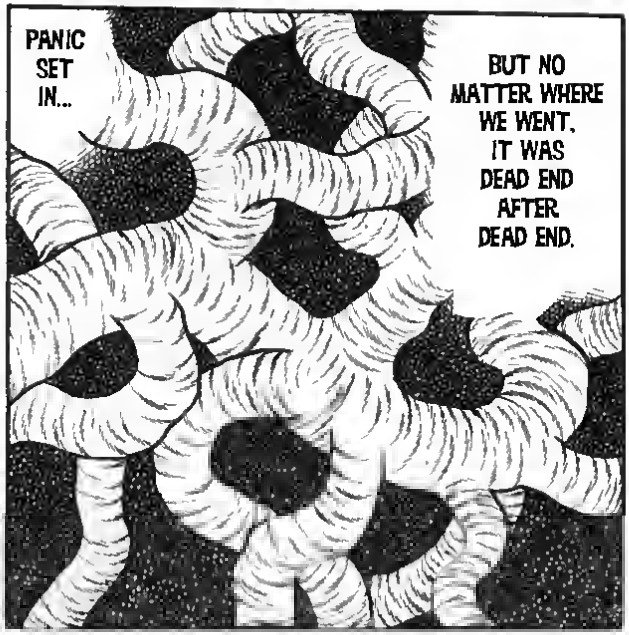
.....
I'LL ...!!
I... I...
... Y, YUKARI ...
.....

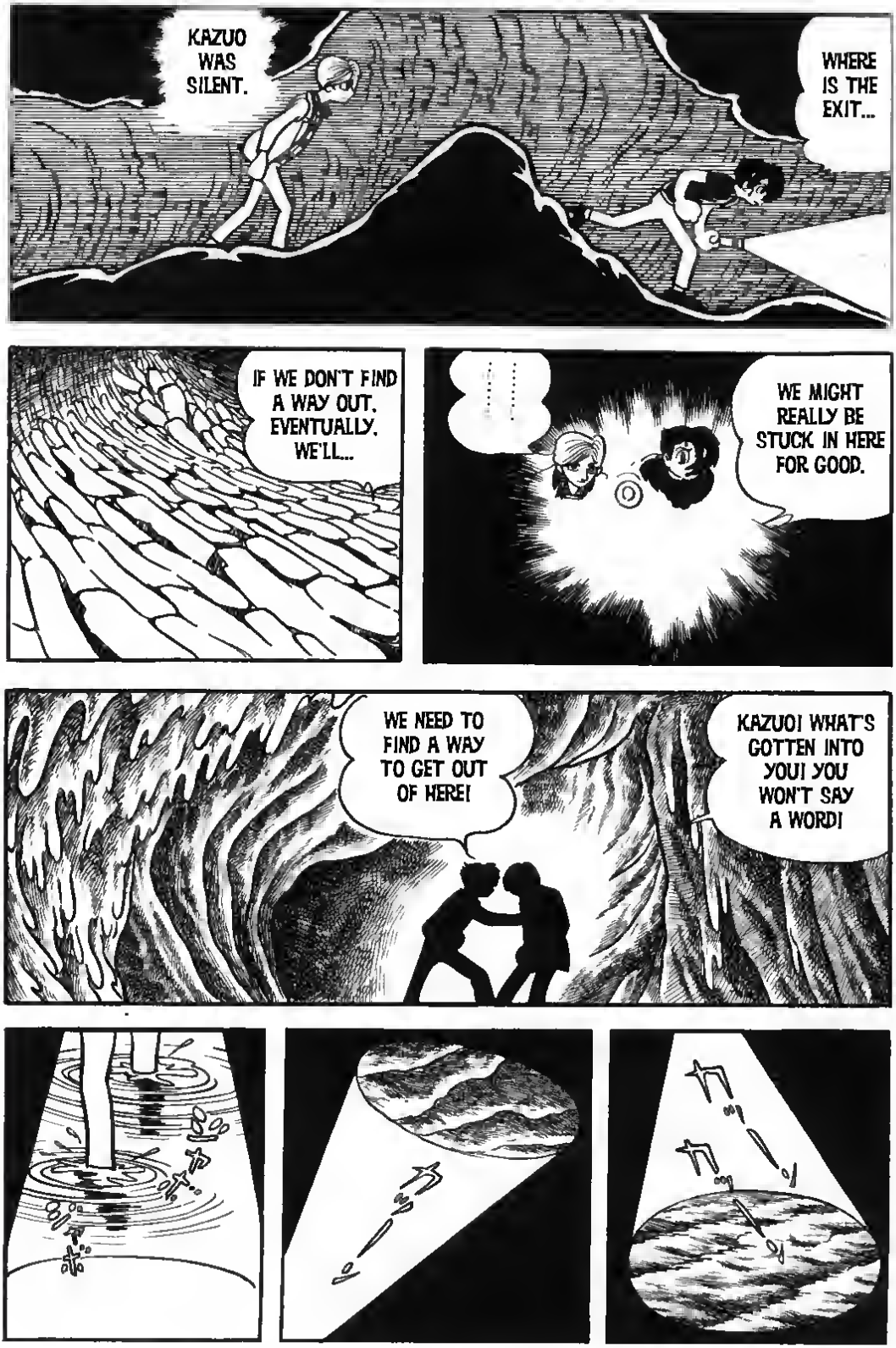
KAZUO...

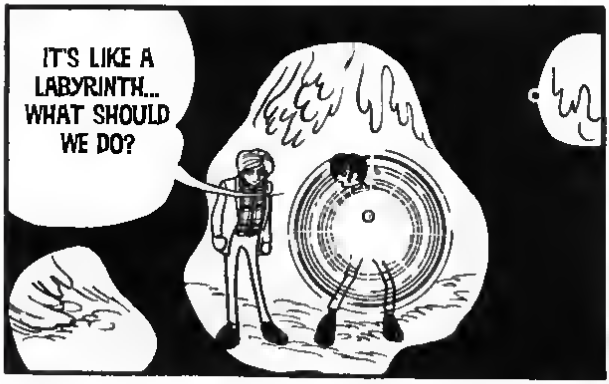
LET'S JUST GO HOME. I WANT TO GIVE YUKARI A PROPER FUNERAL.

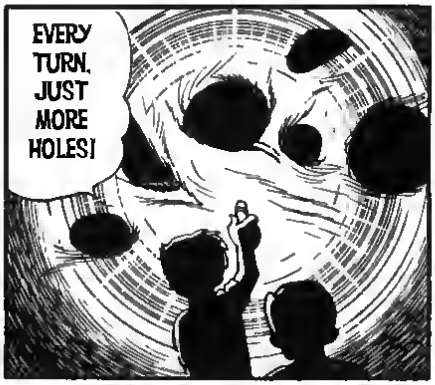
YOU WIN.


THE TUNNELS OF MT. FUJI... LIKE AN UNKNOWN ANTHILL UNDER THE EARTH. IT WAS EXACTLY LIKE I HAD HEARD.


PANIC SET IN...
BUT NO MATTER WHERE WE WENT, IT WAS DEAD END AFTER DEAD END.


KAZUO WAS SILENT.
WHERE IS THE EXIT...
IF WE DON'T FIND A WAY OUT, EVENTUALLY, WE'LL...
.....
WE MIGHT REALLY BE STUCK IN HERE FOR GOOD.
WE NEED TO FIND A WAY TO GET OUT OF HERE!
KAZUO! WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU! YOU WON'T SAY A WORD!


IT'S LIKE A LABYRINTH... WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

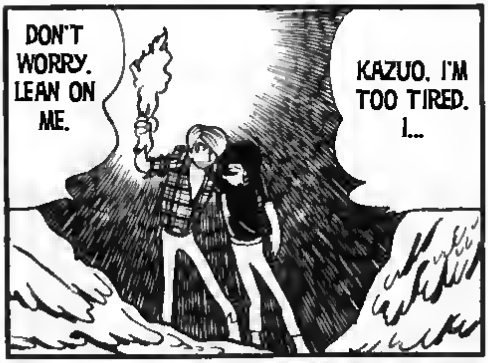

EVERY TURN. JUST MORE HOLES!

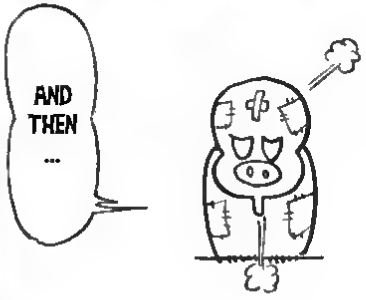
DEAD END...
DON'T SAY THAT. WE'LL GET OUT! HERE. YOU NEED TO DRINK SOME WATER.
WE'RE DOOMED! WE'RE NEVER GOING TO GET OUT OF HERE!
I'LL FIND THE WAY OUT. DON'T WORRY.
OK. WE'LL JUST BURN MINE.
THEY'RE SOAKED FROM WHEN I FELL BACK THERE...
MY CLOTHES ?
HOW ARE YOUR CLOTHES? ARE THEY DRY?

THERE'S WIND COMING FROM SOMEWHERE IN THIS CAVE.
WHAT ARE YOU...?
WE CAN TELL WHICH DIRECTION IT'S COMING FROM.
EVEN IF WE CAN'T SENSE IT, IF WE USE THIS FLAME HERE...
PROBABLY. WIND ALWAYS BLOWS UPWARD SO HOPEFULLY IT WILL LEAD US TO ABOVE GROUND.
THAT'LL TELL US WHERE THE EXIT IS!
THIS WAY.
I FORGOT HOW WELL KAZUO WORKS UNDER PRESSURE!

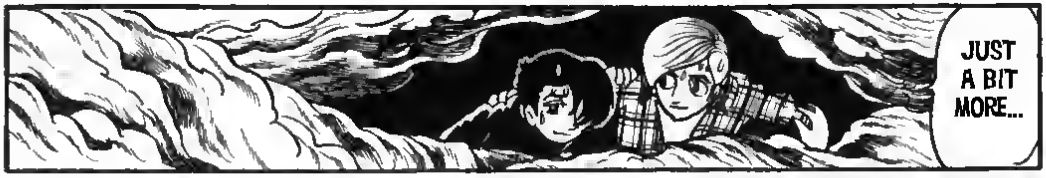
THE PATH IS GRADUALLY BECOMING WIDER. THAT'S A GOOD SIGN.

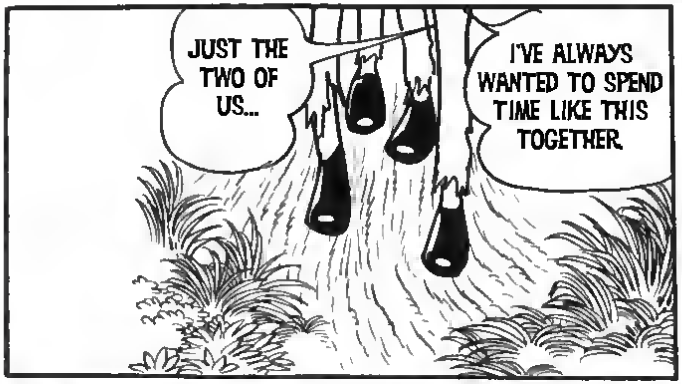
KAZUO BURNED MORE OF HIS CLOTHES AS WE WENT ON.


DON'T WORRY. LEAN ON ME.
KAZUO, I'M TOO TIRED. I...

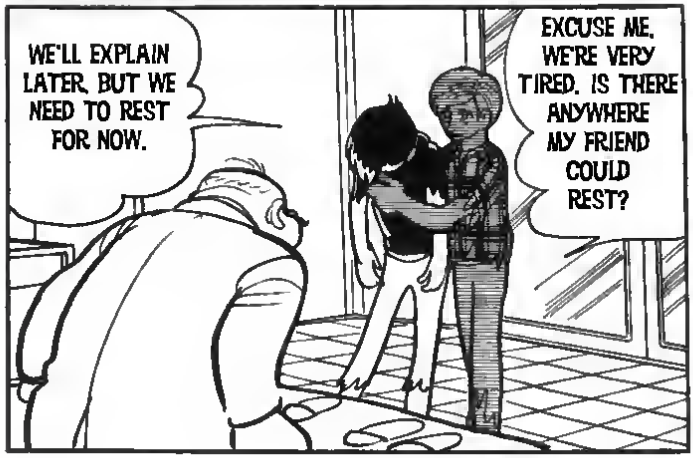

AND THEN ...

WE MADE IT.
THE EXIT!

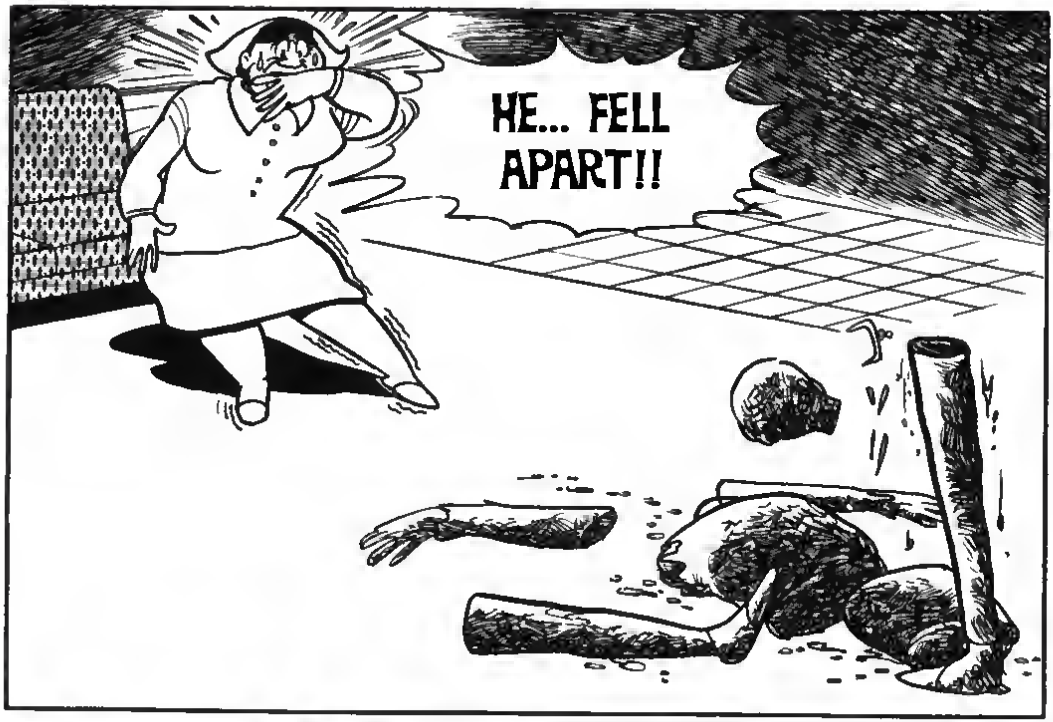

JUST A BIT MORE...

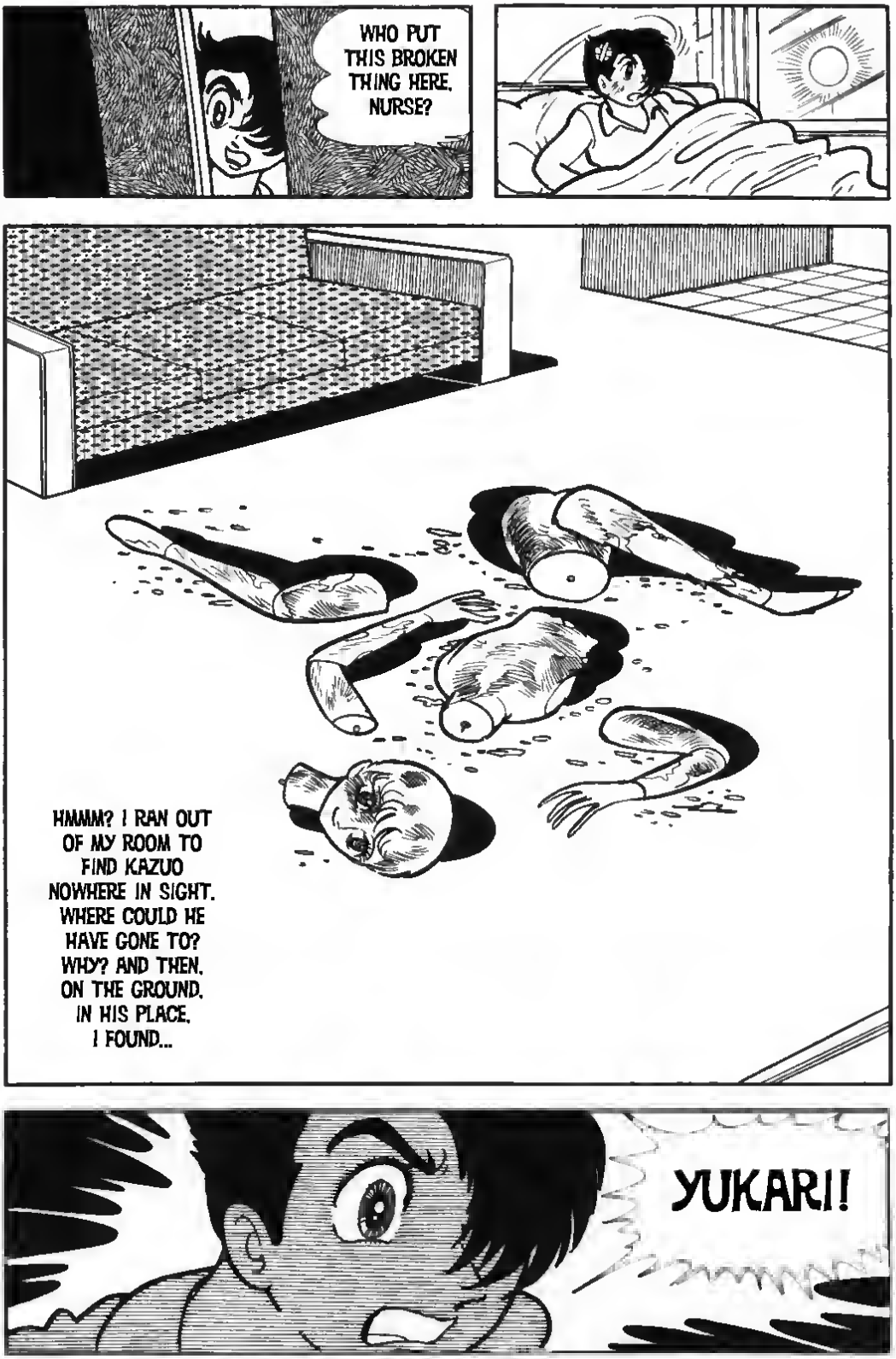

JUST THE TWO OF US...
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SPEND TIME LIKE THIS TOGETHER.

LOOK AT THE STARS! WE'RE FINALLY OUT...

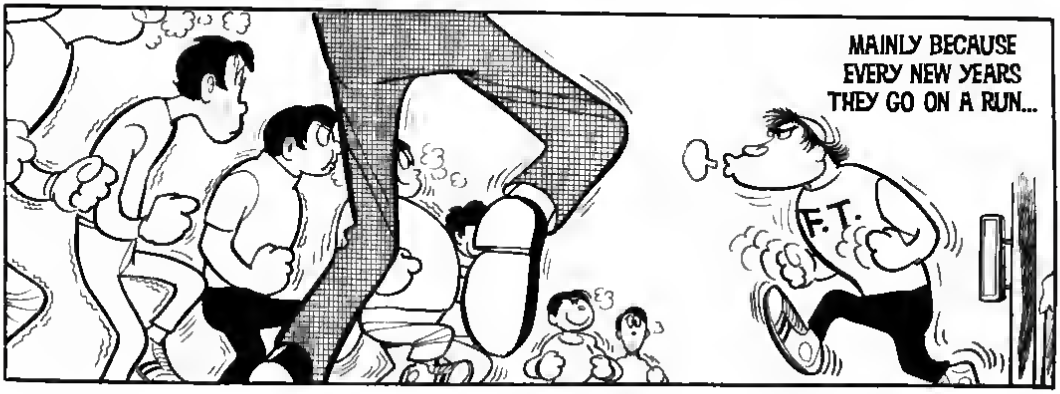

WE'LL EXPLAIN LATER, BUT WE NEED TO REST FOR NOW.
EXCUSE ME, WE'RE VERY TIRED. IS THERE ANYWHERE MY FRIEND COULD REST?

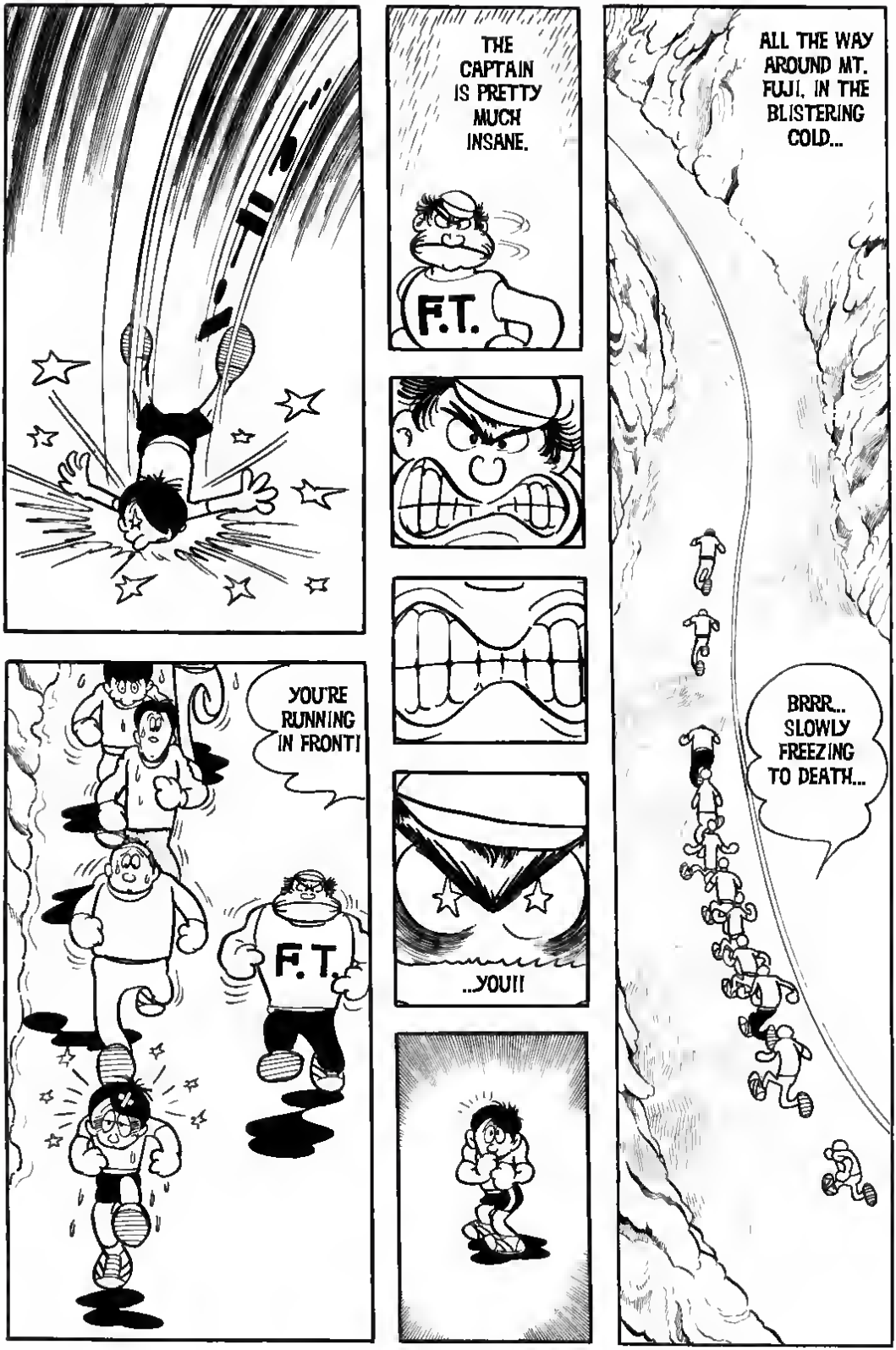
THE LOBBY.
...WHERE IS MY FRIEND WHO BROUGHT ME HERE?
KAZUO. I MISJUDGED YOU! YOU REALLY ARE A TRUE FRIEND.
I'LL GO GET HIM.
WH, WHAT ...!
YOUR FRIEND WAS ...
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME TEA? DON'T JUST STAND THERE.
ボロッ
ボロッ
EEK!!!

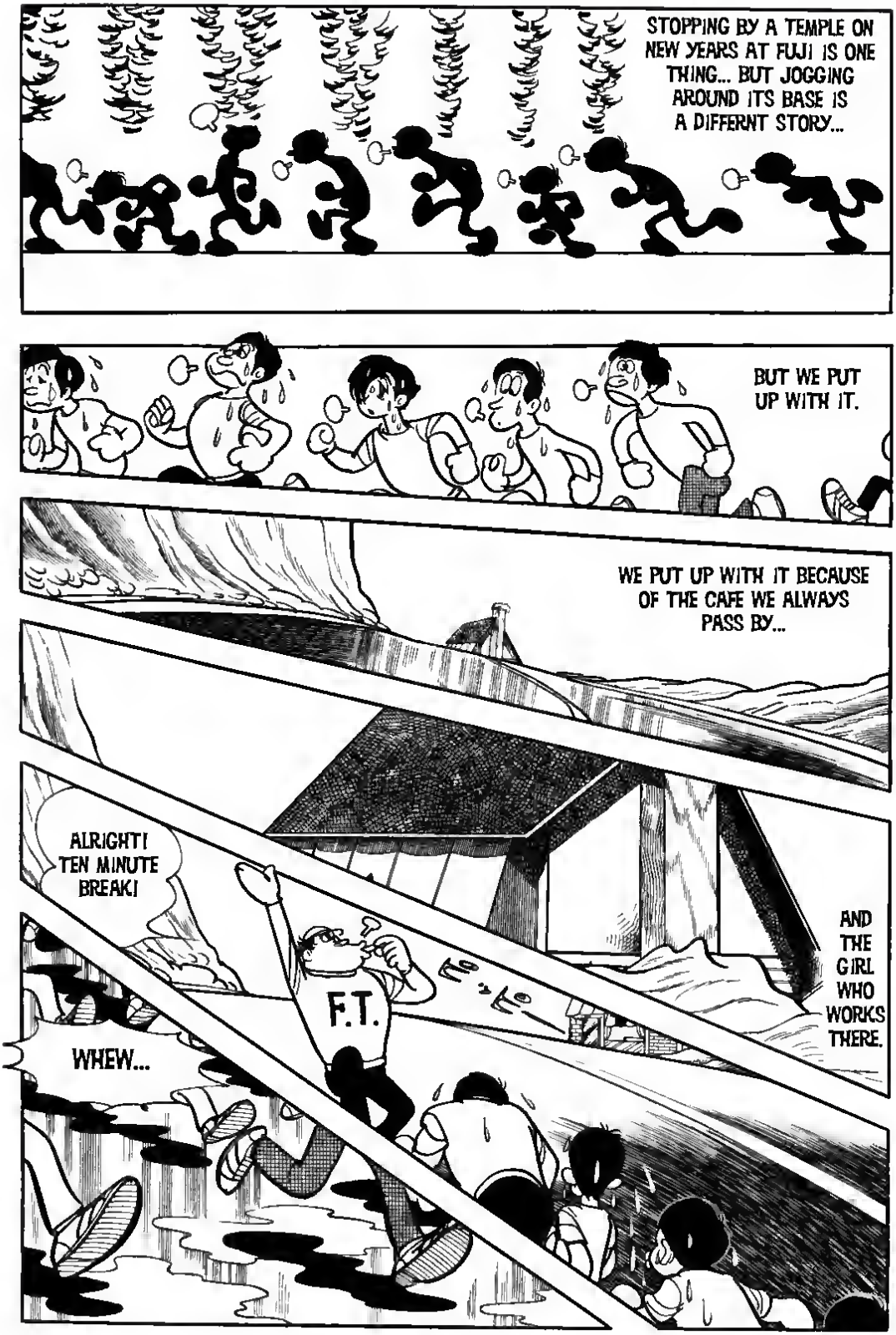

HE... FELL APART!!

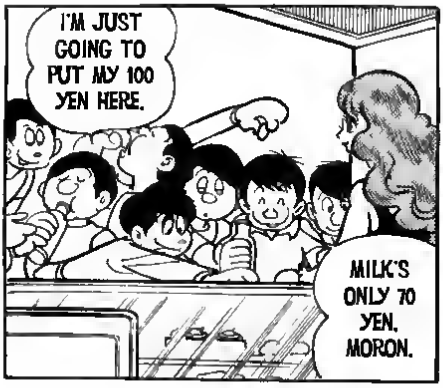

WHO PUT THIS BROKEN THING HERE, NURSE?
HMMM? I RAN OUT OF MY ROOM TO FIND KAZUO NOWHERE IN SIGHT. WHERE COULD HE HAVE GONE TO? WHY? AND THEN, ON THE GROUND, IN HIS PLACE, I FOUND...
YUKARI!

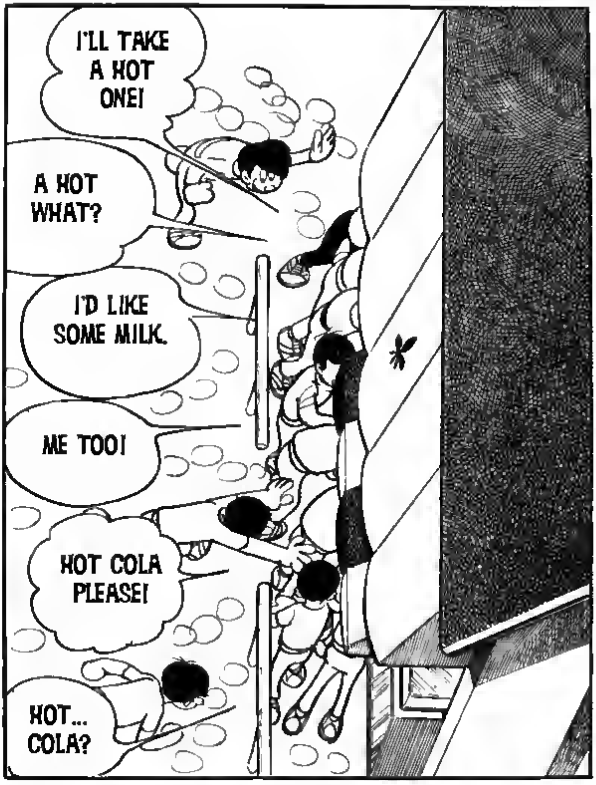
"P" MIDDLE SCHOOL HAS A PRETTY INFAMOUS TRACK AND FIELD TEAM...

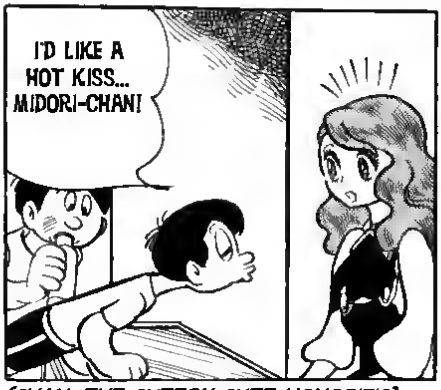

MAINLY BECAUSE EVERY NEW YEARS THEY GO ON A RUN...
E.T.


ALL THE WAY AROUND MT. FUJI, IN THE BLISTERING COLD...
BRRR... SLOWLY FREEZING TO DEATH...
THE CAPTAIN IS PRETTY MUCH INSANE.
F.T.
...YOU!!
YOU'RE RUNNING IN FRONT!
F.T.

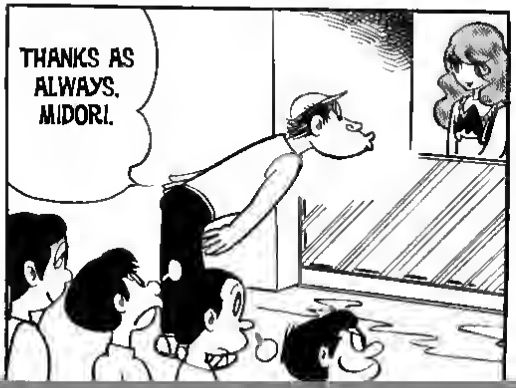

STOPPING BY A TEMPLE ON NEW YEARS AT FUJI IS ONE THING... BUT JOGGING AROUND ITS BASE IS A DIFFERNT STORY...
BUT WE PUT UP WITH IT.
WE PUT UP WITH IT BECAUSE OF THE CAFE WE ALWAYS PASS BY...
ALRIGHT! TEN MINUTE BREAK!
F.T.
AND THE GIRL WHO WORKS THERE.
WHEW...

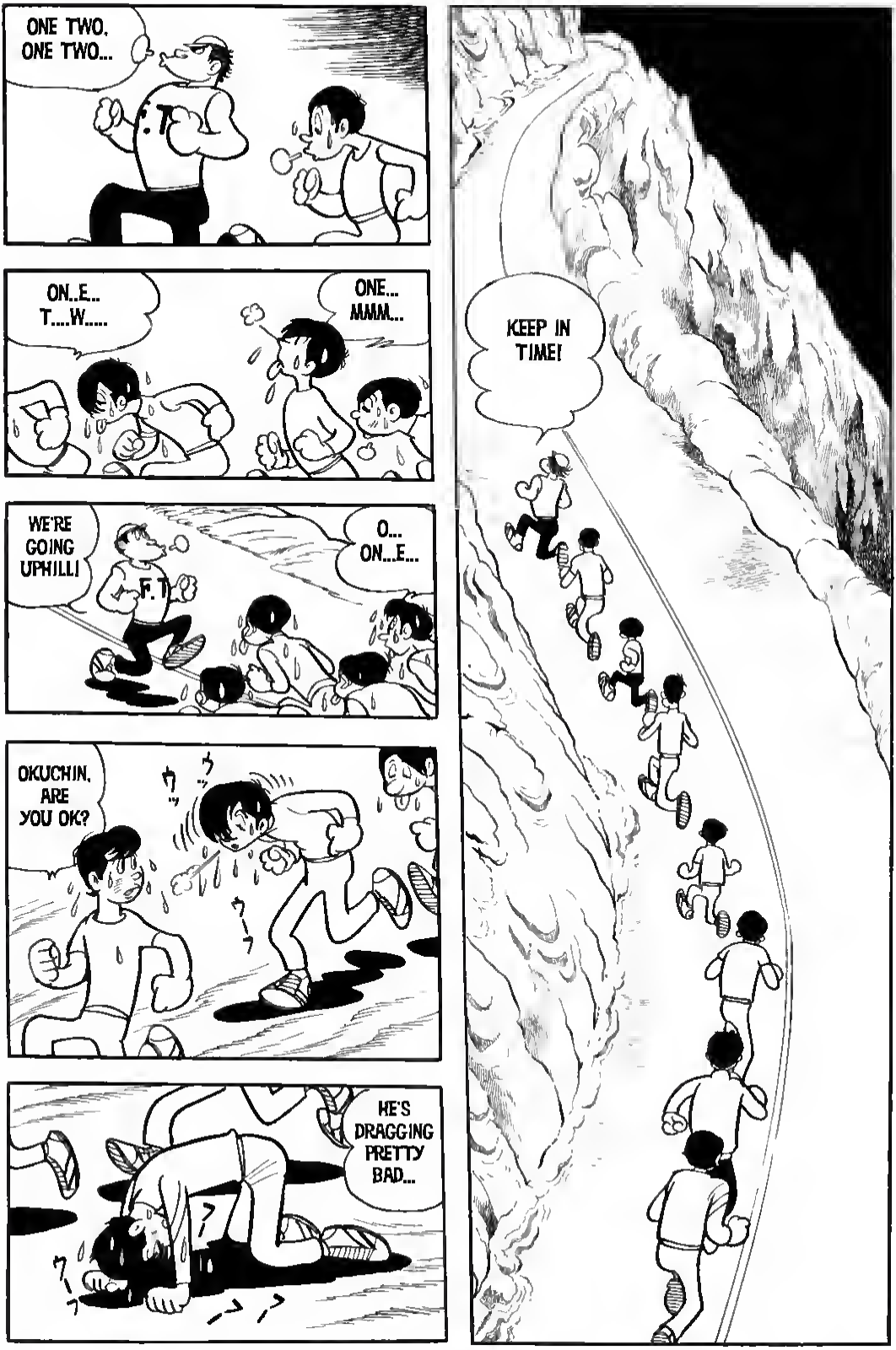


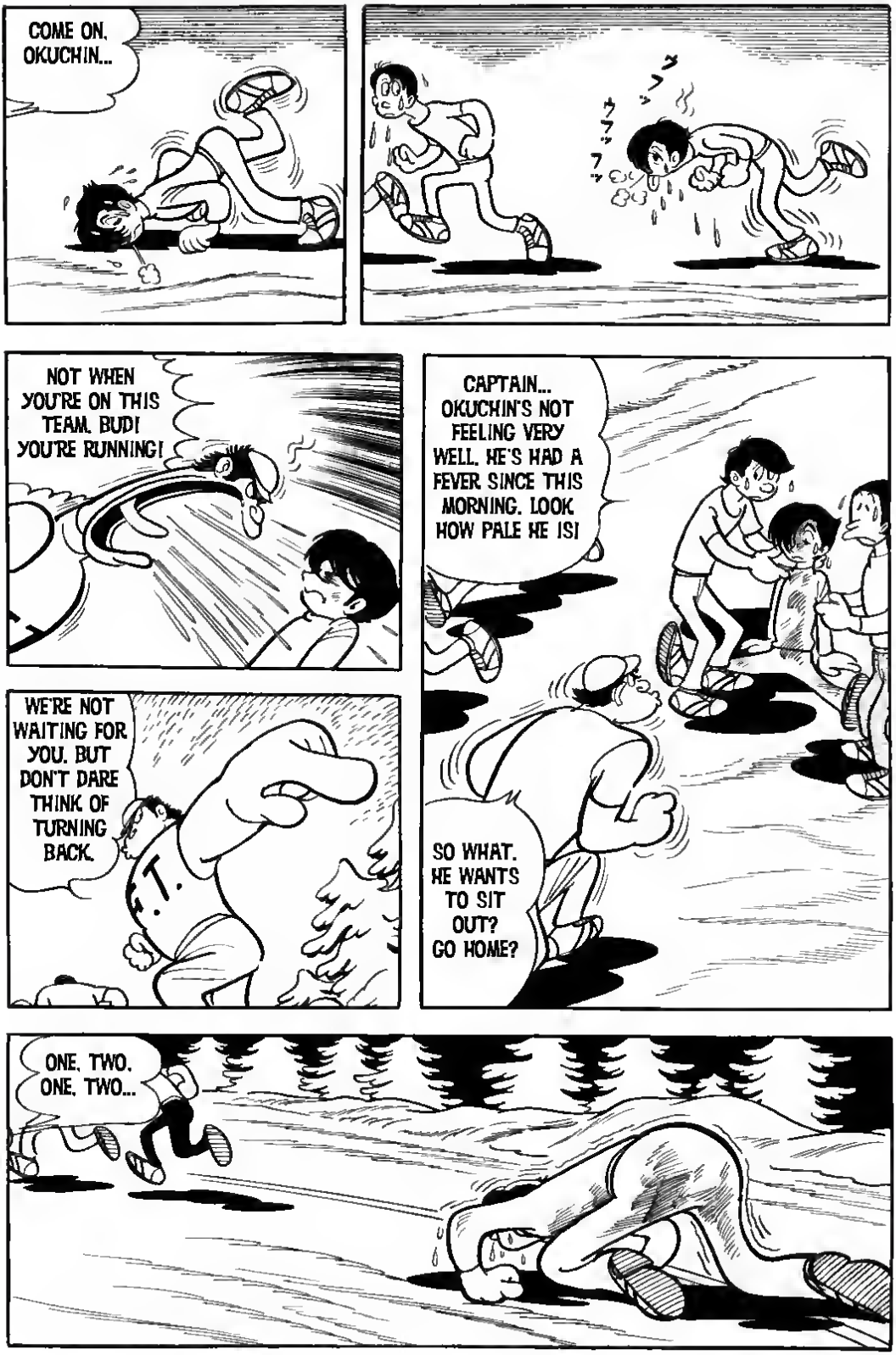


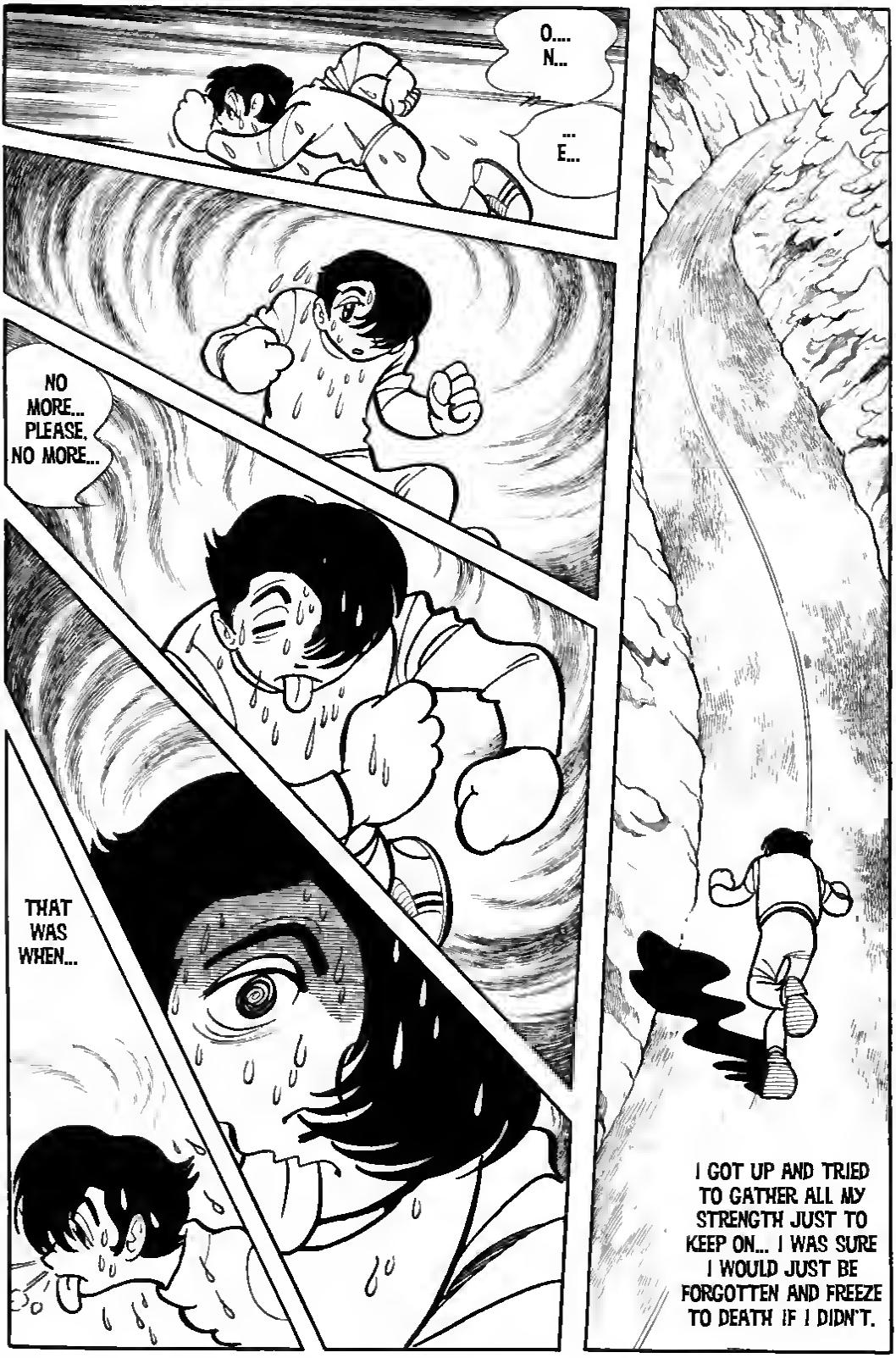


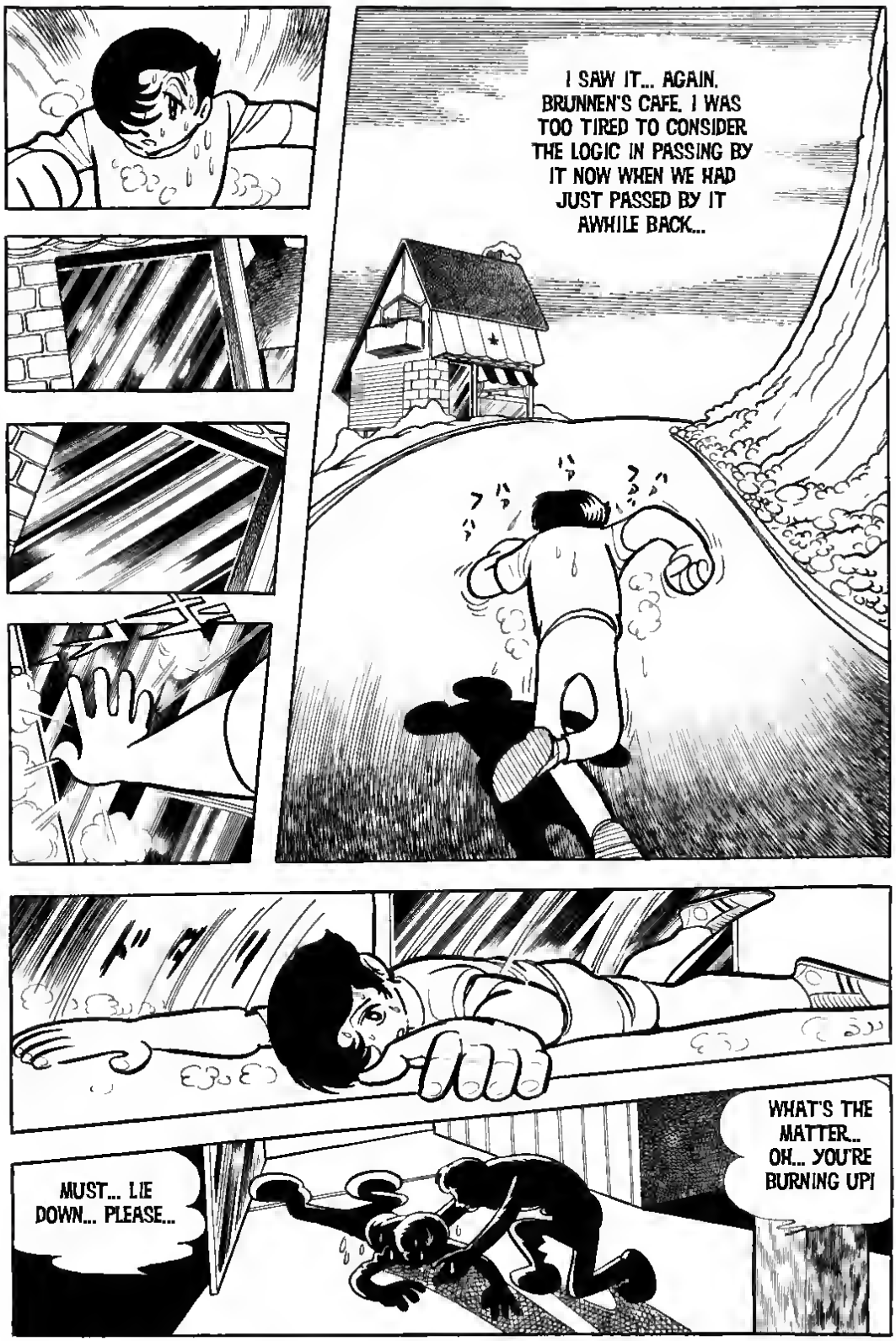
(CHAN, THE CUTESY CUTE HONORIFIC)




ONE TWO, ONE TWO...
ON..E... T....W.....
ONE... MMM...
WE'RE GOING UPHILL!
O... ON...E...
F.T
OKUCHIN, ARE YOU OK?
HE'S DRAGGING PRETTY BAD...
KEEP IN TIME!

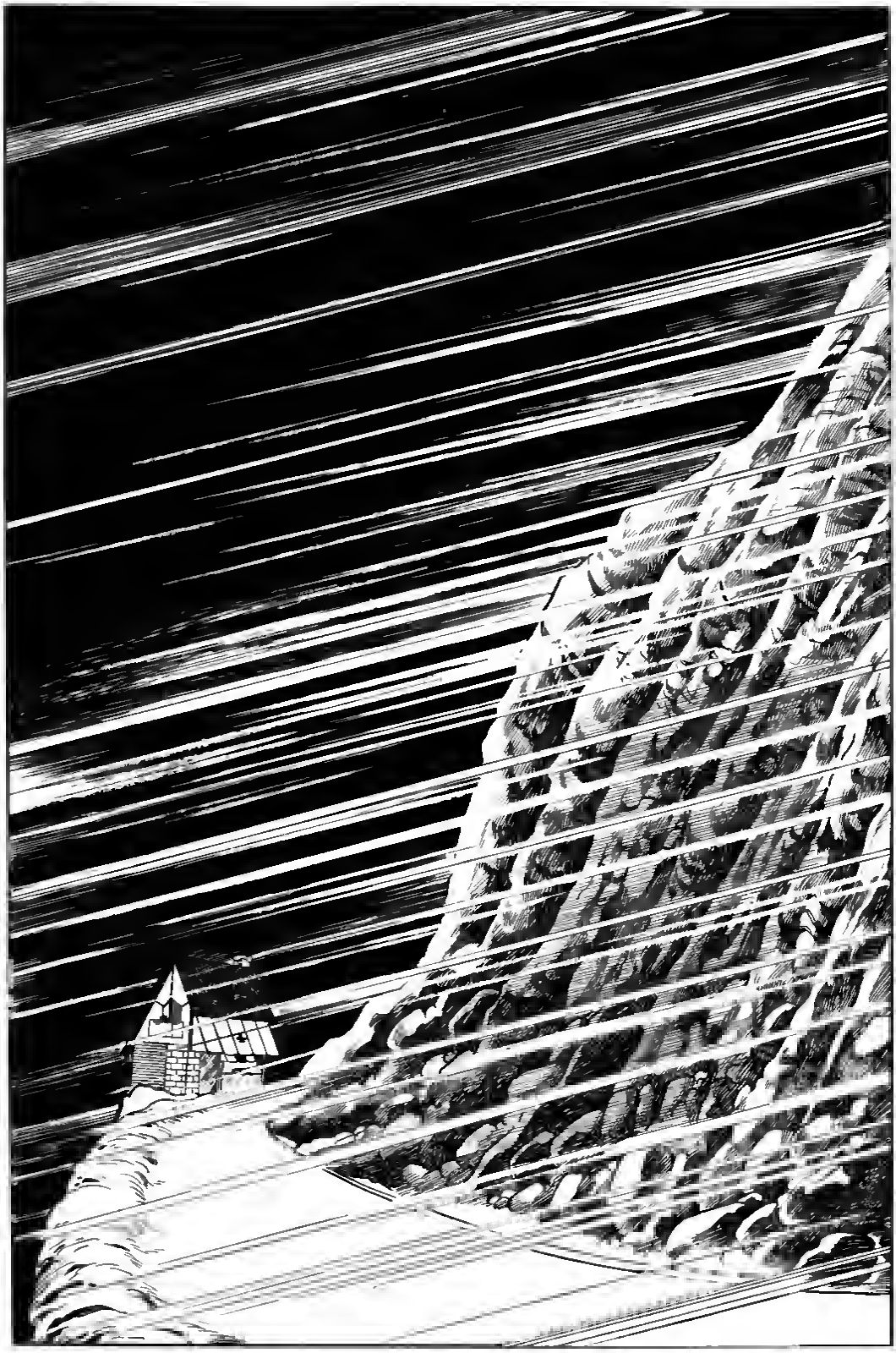

COME ON, OKUCHIN...
NOT WHEN YOU'RE ON THIS TEAM, BUD! YOU'RE RUNNING!
WE'RE NOT WAITING FOR YOU. BUT DON'T DARE THINK OF TURNING BACK.
CAPTAIN... OKUCHIN'S NOT FEELING VERY WELL. HE'S HAD A FEVER SINCE THIS MORNING. LOOK HOW PALE HE IS!
SO WHAT. HE WANTS TO SIT OUT? GO HOME?
ONE, TWO, ONE, TWO...


O....
N...
...
E...
NO MORE... PLEASE, NO MORE...
THAT WAS WHEN...
I GOT UP AND TRIED TO GATHER ALL MY STRENGTH JUST TO KEEP ON... I WAS SURE I WOULD JUST BE FORGOTTEN AND FREEZE TO DEATH IF I DIDN'T.

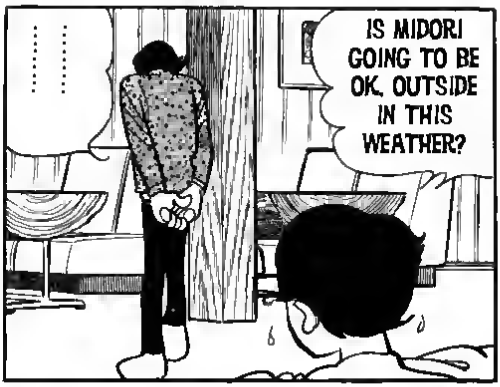

I SAW IT... AGAIN. BRUNNEN'S CAFE. I WAS TOO TIRED TO CONSIDER THE LOGIC IN PASSING BY IT NOW WHEN WE HAD JUST PASSED BY IT AWHILE BACK...
ドアー
MUST... LIE DOWN... PLEASE...
WHAT'S THE MATTER... OH... YOU'RE BURNING UP!

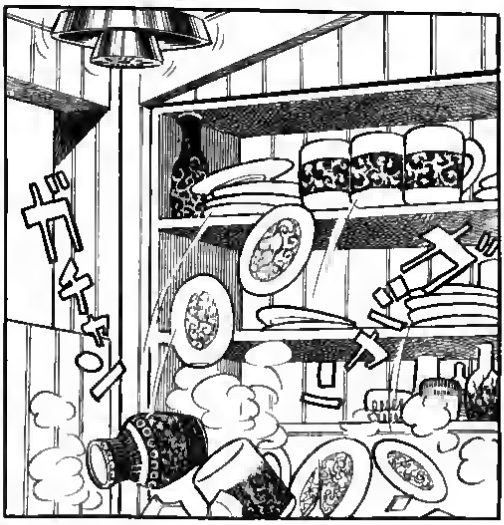
MIDORI... CAN YOU GET THE MEDICINE BOX?
HE'LL FEEL BETTER IF HE RESTS HERE AWHILE.
MMM... NO... STOP...
LET HIM HAVE SOME OF THAT MEDICINE... YOU KNOW, "THAT" MEDICINE...
.....
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO GIVE YOU REGULAR COLD MEDICINE FOR NOW. WE'LL CALL A DOCTOR TO SEE YOU TOMORROW.
THAT'S TOO BAD... THE MEDICINE IS VERY GOOD.
I GUESS WE MUST'VE USED IT ALL UP.
THERE'S NO MORE?

(MAKING PAINFUL SOUNDS)
(AND MORE OF THEM)



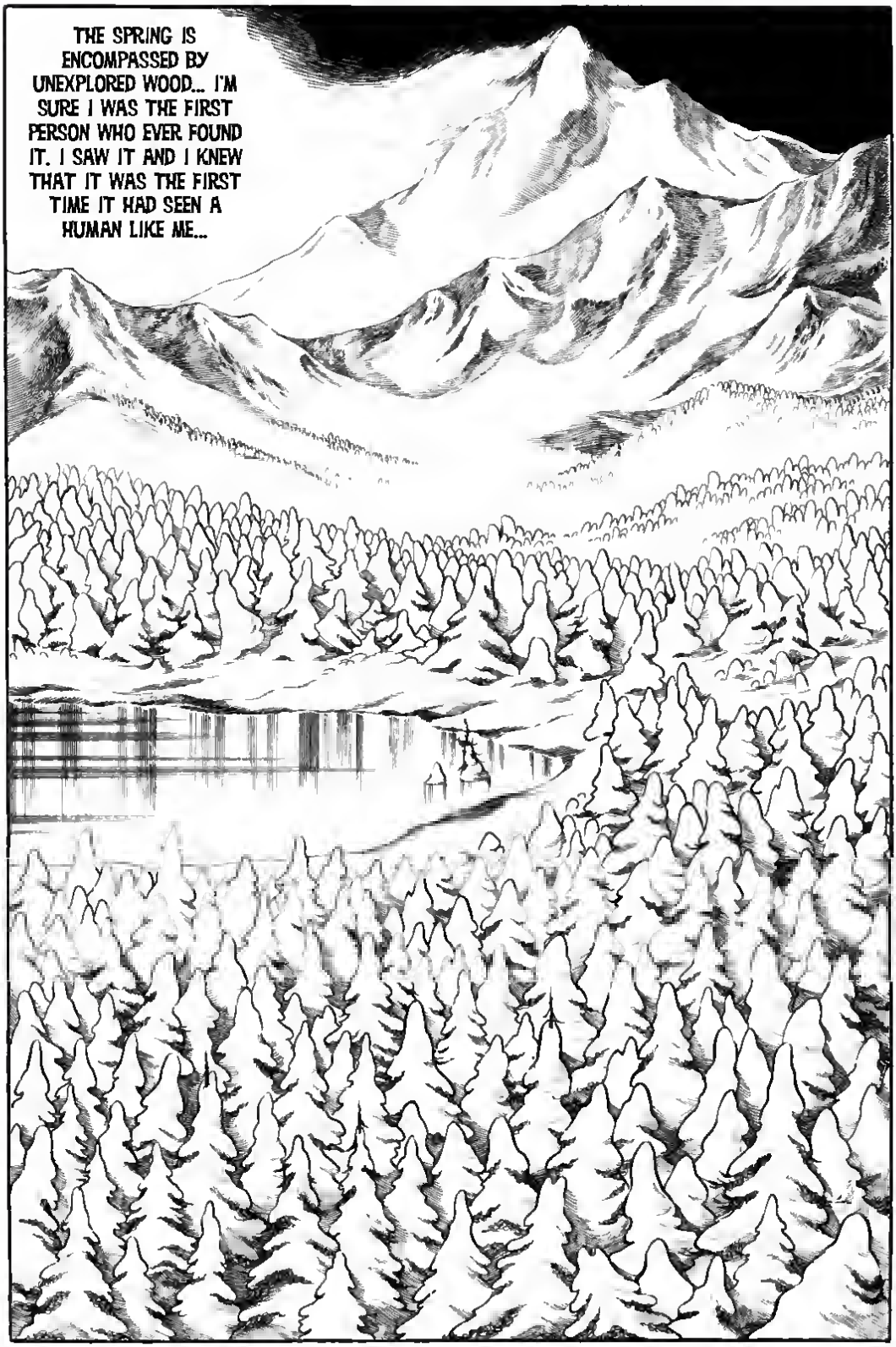
MIDORI...?
DID YOU GO TO BED?
MIDORI ...?
GETTING PRETTY BAD OUTSIDE.
SHE MUST'VE GONE TO GET THAT MEDICINE!
MIDORI !!!
AND SHE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN GO GET IT.
IF YOU GRIND THAT MOSS UP AND DRINK IT WITH WATER, IT'LL CURE ANYTHING.
NO, THE MEDICINE IS IN A FOREST NEAR HERE.
SHE WENT ALL THE WAY BACK TO TOWN?
IT COMES FROM THE MOSS IN A SPRING THERE..
HMM... I PROBABLY SHOULD STOP THERE.
...WHY ONLY HER?


IS MIDORI GOING TO BE OK, OUTSIDE IN THIS WEATHER?

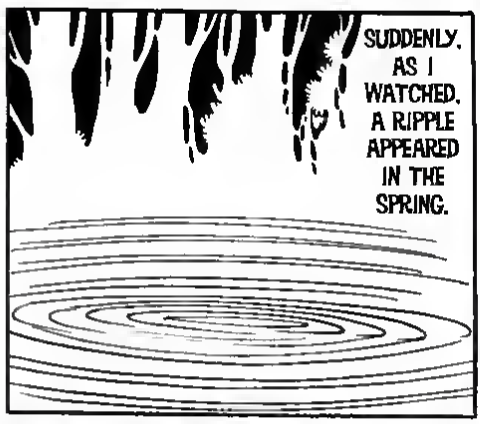


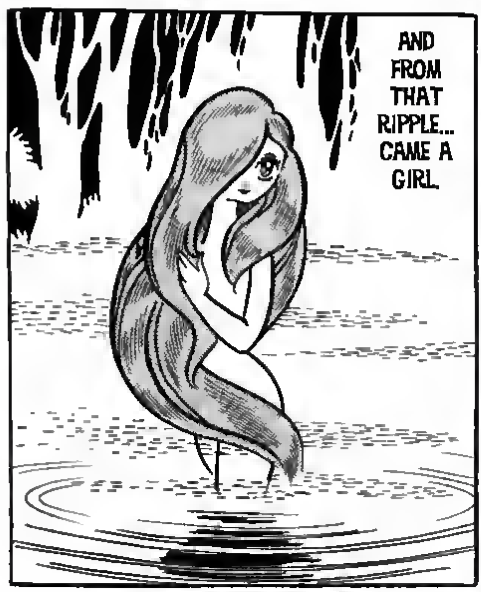
MIDORI!
YOU GOT IT!
IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR FEVER GOT WORSE! HERE, TRY THIS...
カッカッカ
DON'T BE SO RECKLESS... I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU!
THAT'S NOT GOOD...
YOUR DAD...!?
WHAT?! SOMEONE SAW YOU?!
WELL PART OF IT IS JUST THAT I'M BLUSHING, UMMM...
モグモグ

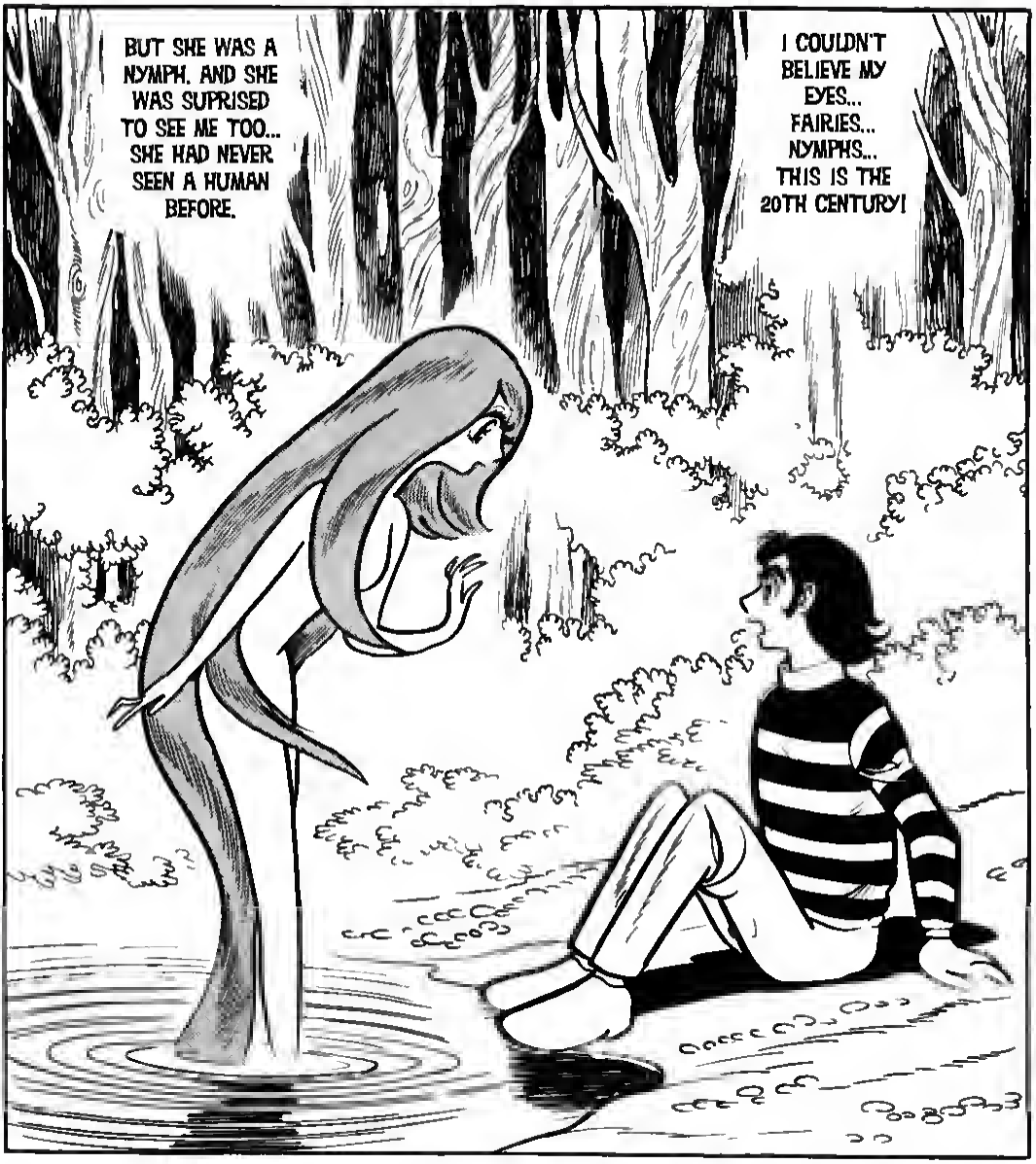
WE NEED TO ACT FAST...
HE'LL MOST LIKELY SHOW UP HERE FOR YOU TONIGHT...
THAT MEANS HE'LL HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TRACK YOU BACK TO HERE.
WELL... THE TRUTH IS... MIDORI ISN'T ACTUALLY A HUMAN.
THAT'S FINE BUT... CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON?
OK?
LISTEN. I NEED YOU TO PROMISE THAT YOU'LL STAY CALM AND WON'T TELL ANYONE ELSE ANYTHING YOU'RE ABOUT TO SEE.
IT WAS FOR ME. TOO...
NYMPHS ARE FAIRIES THAT LIVE CLOSE TO WATER. I'M SURE THIS IS HARD TO ACCEPT SO QUICKLY...
MIDORI CAME FROM THE FOREST SPRING... SHE'S A NYMPH.
NOT HUMAN? HAHA... WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'VE SEEN HER AT THIS STORE A DOZEN TIMES..
IN THE FOREST WE OWN NEAR HERE, THERE IS A BEAUTIFUL SPRING...
I'M THE OWNER OF MOST ALL OF THE LAND AROUND HERE. MY FATHER BOUGHT IT ALL A LONG TIME AGO.

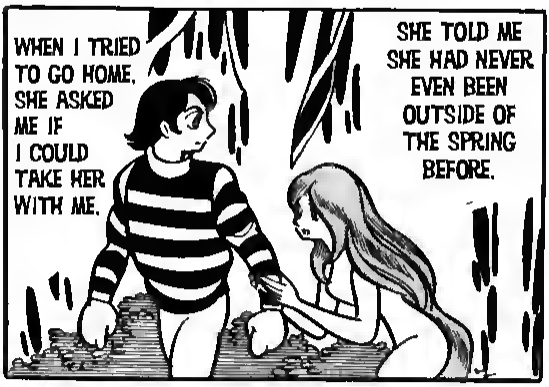

THE SPRING IS ENCOMPASSED BY UNEXPLORED WOOD... I'M SURE I WAS THE FIRST PERSON WHO EVER FOUND IT. I SAW IT AND I KNEW THAT IT WAS THE FIRST TIME IT HAD SEEN A HUMAN LIKE ME...

I WAS TAKEN IN BY IT'S BEAUTY.

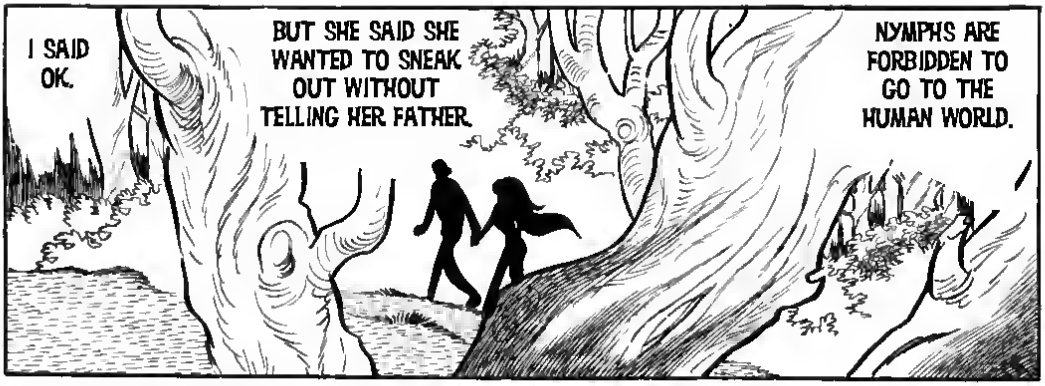

SUDDENLY, AS I WATCHED, A RIPPLE APPEARED IN THE SPRING.


AND FROM THAT RIPPLE... CAME A GIRL.


BUT SHE WAS A NYMPH. AND SHE WAS SUPRISED TO SEE ME TOO... SHE HAD NEVER SEEN A HUMAN BEFORE.
I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES... FAIRIES... NYMPHS... THIS IS THE 20TH CENTURY!

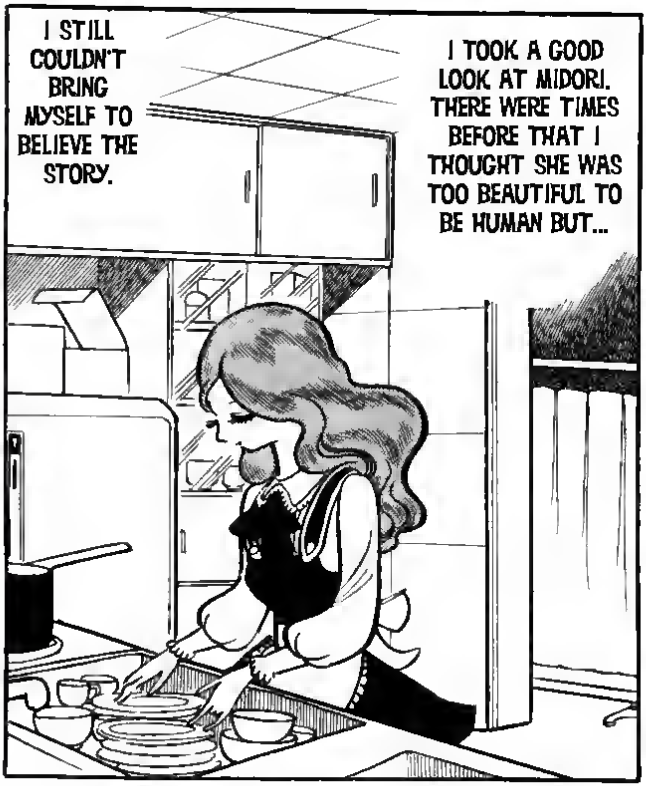

WHEN I TRIED TO GO HOME, SHE ASKED ME IF I COULD TAKE HER WITH ME.
SHE TOLD ME SHE HAD NEVER EVEN BEEN OUTSIDE OF THE SPRING BEFORE.

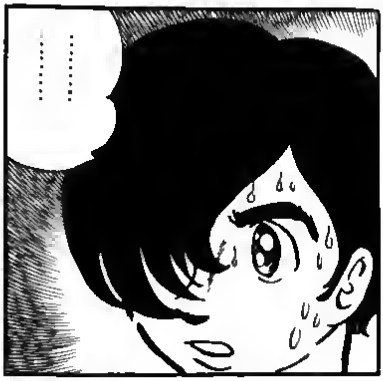
I TRIED TO CONTAIN MY SURPRISE AND TALK TO HER ABOUT THE REST OF THE WORLD, AND HUMAN SOCIETY.


I SAID OK.
BUT SHE SAID SHE WANTED TO SNEAK OUT WITHOUT TELLING HER FATHER.
NYMPHS ARE FORBIDDEN TO GO TO THE HUMAN WORLD.

DO YOU THINK I'M JOKING? WHAT ABOUT THIS MOSS, THEN..?
YOU'RE... KIDDING, RIGHT?

SHE'S COMPLETLY ADJUSTED TO HUMAN LIFE HERE.
EVER SINCE THEN SHE'S BEEN HERE AT MY STORE.
THAT GIRL WAS MIDORI.


I STILL COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO BELIEVE THE STORY.
I TOOK A GOOD LOOK AT MIDORI. THERE WERE TIMES BEFORE THAT I THOUGHT SHE WAS TOO BEAUTIFUL TO BE HUMAN BUT...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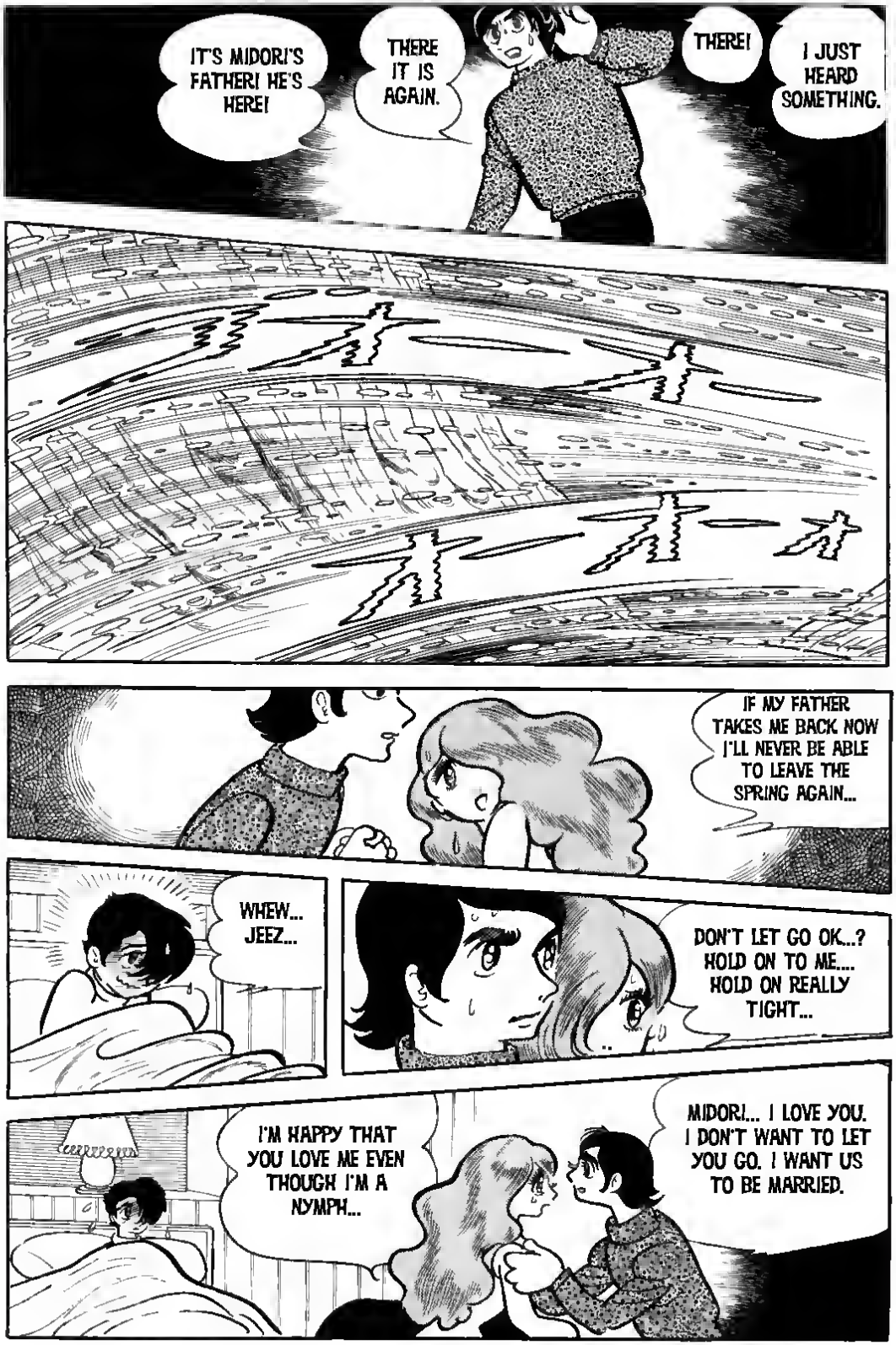
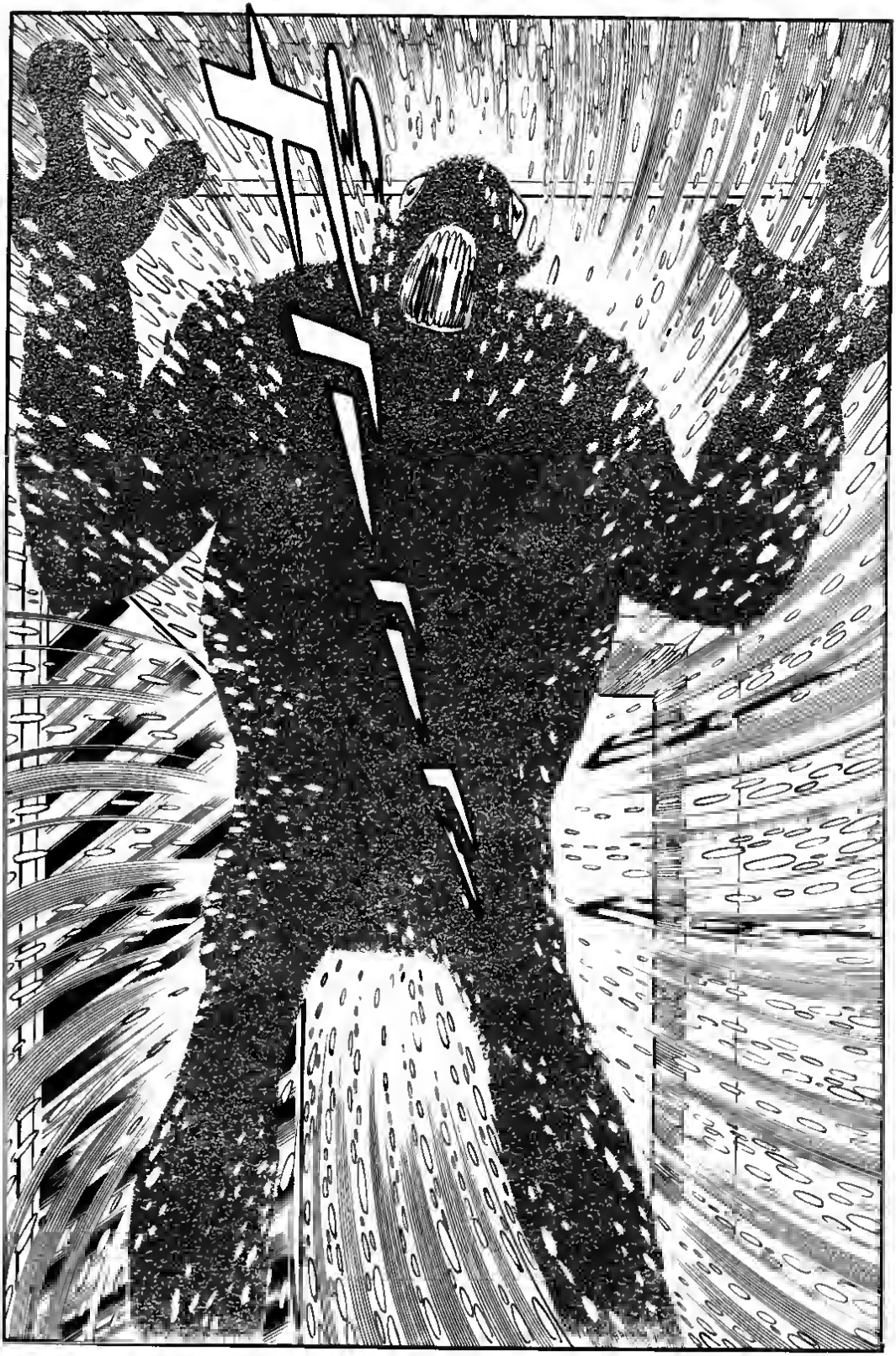
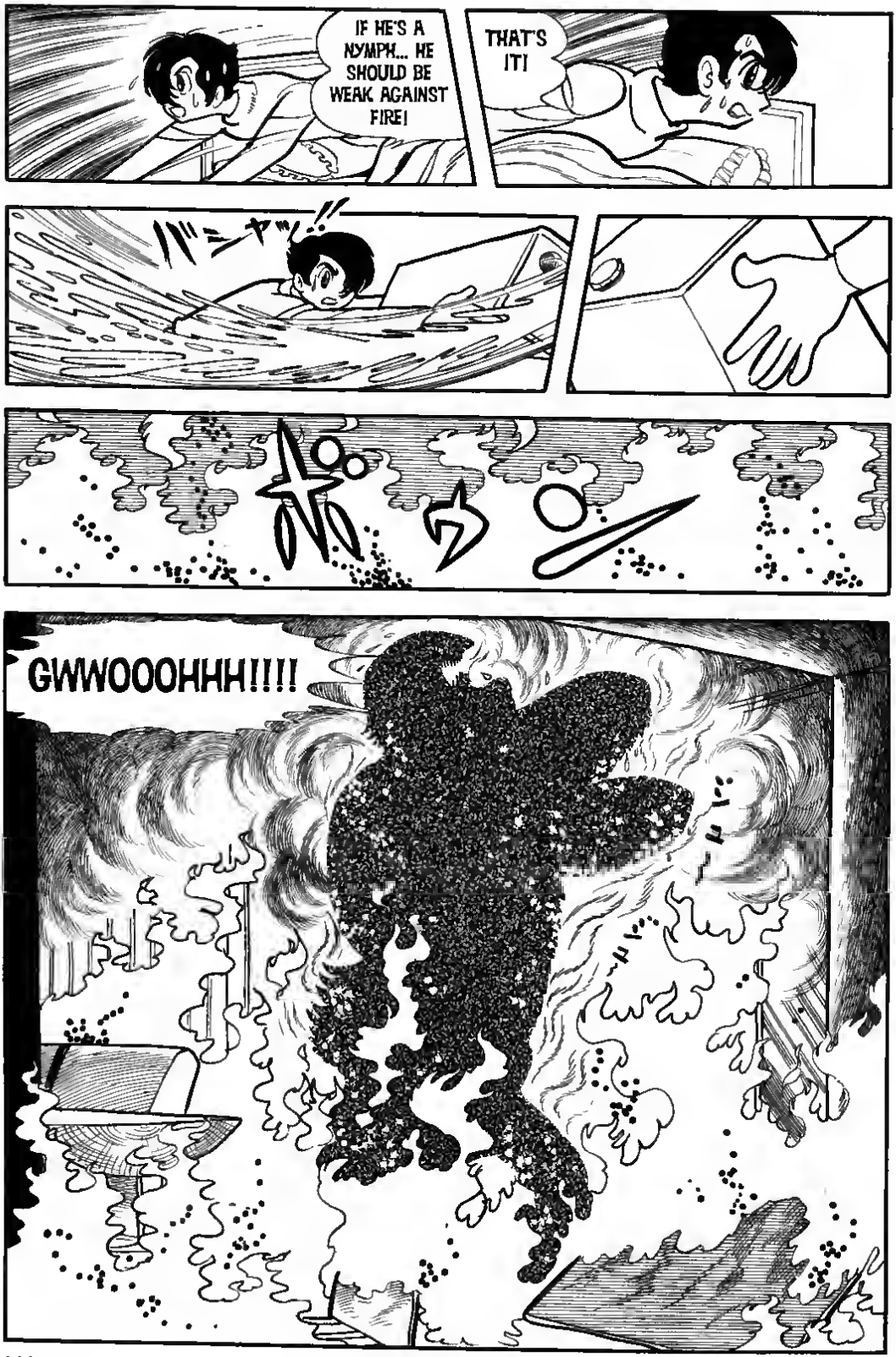

IT'S MIDORI'S FATHER! HE'S HERE!
THERE IT IS AGAIN.
THERE!
I JUST HEARD SOMETHING.
IF MY FATHER TAKES ME BACK NOW I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO LEAVE THE SPRING AGAIN...
WHEW... JEEZ...
DON'T LET GO OK...? HOLD ON TO ME.... HOLD ON REALLY TIGHT...
I'M HAPPY THAT YOU LOVE ME EVEN THOUGH I'M A NYMPH...
MIDORI... I LOVE YOU. I DON'T WANT TO LET YOU GO. I WANT US TO BE MARRIED.

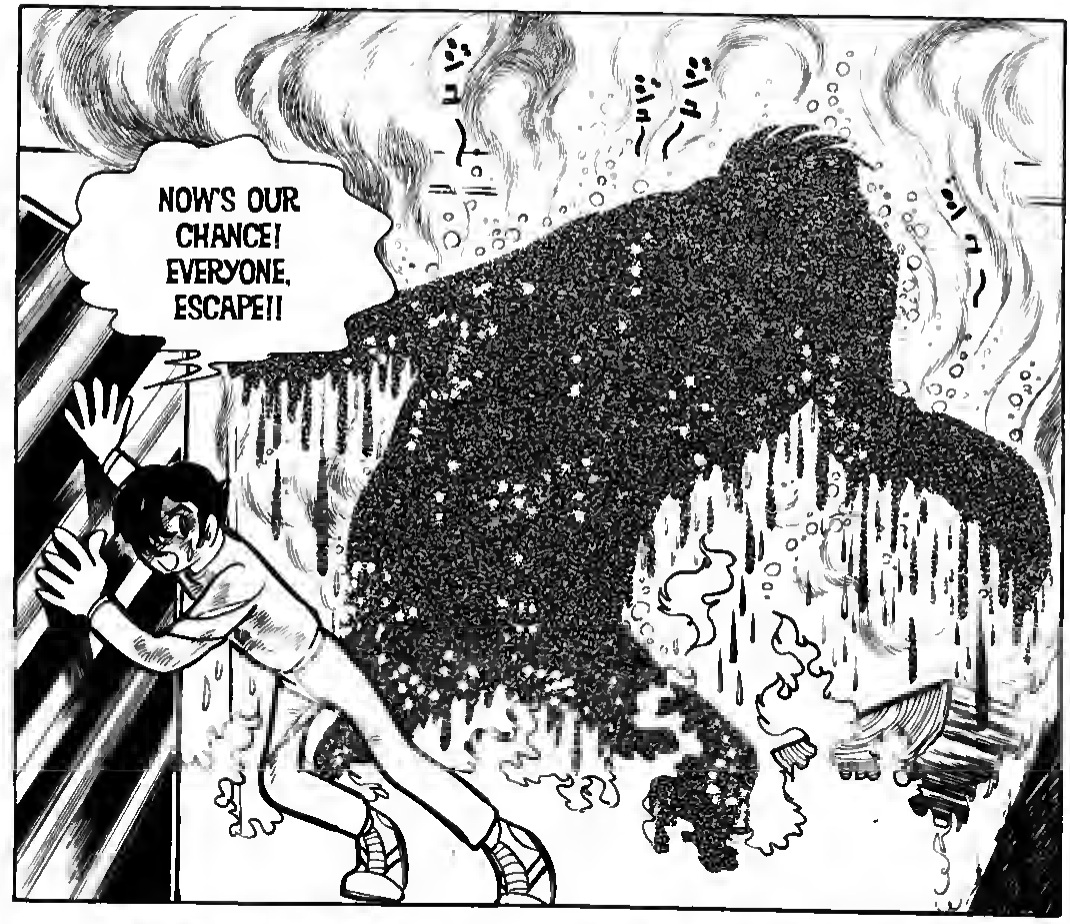
MIDDLE: GIVE ME BACK MY DAUGHTER...

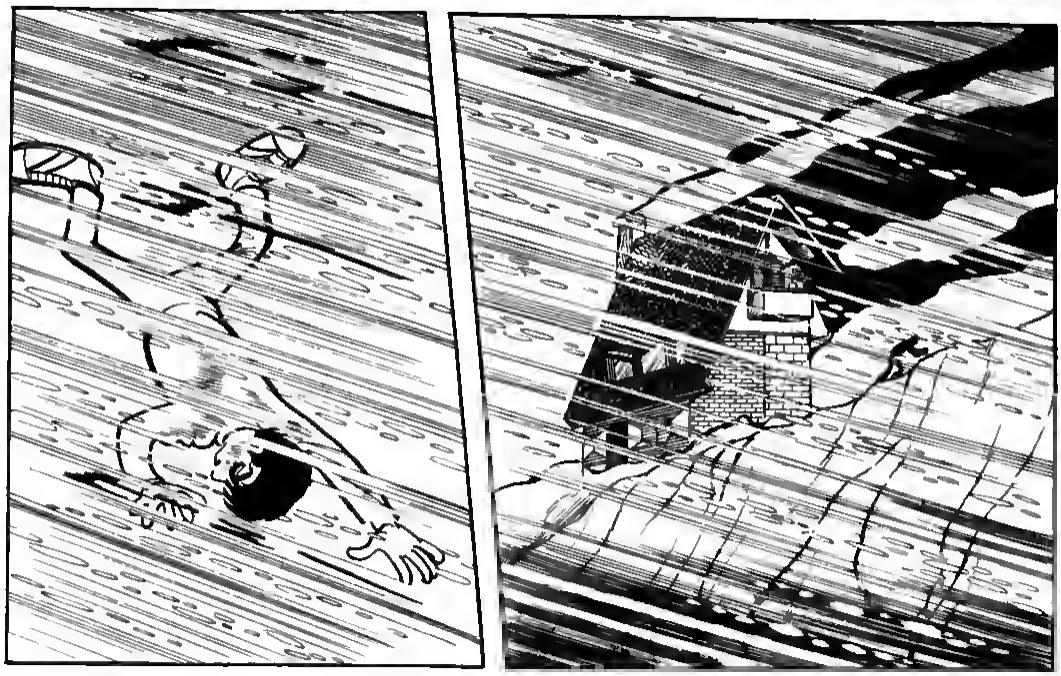
GIVE HER BACK...
LEAVE! I WON'T LET YOU TAKE HER BACK WITH YOU!!



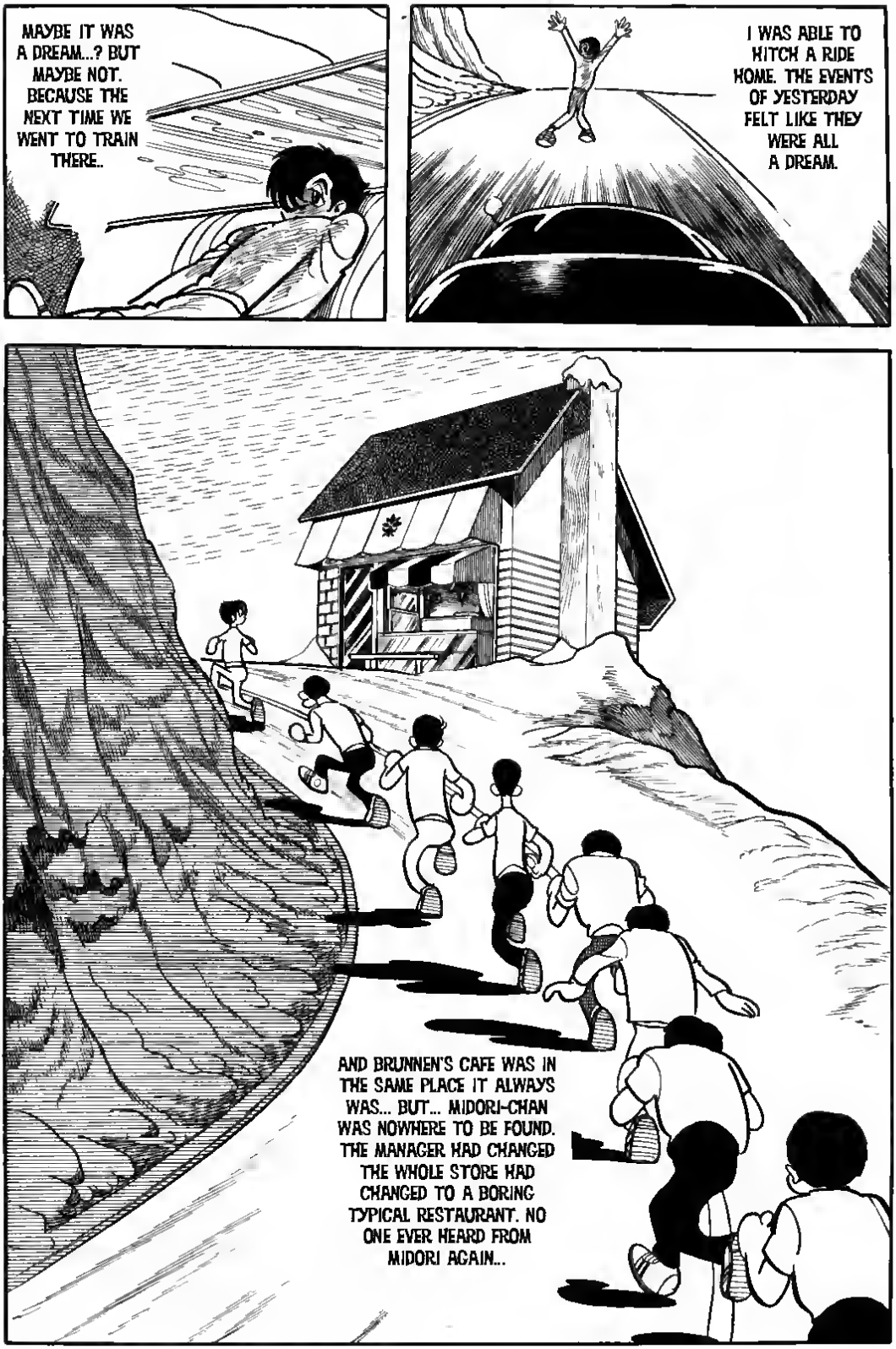
FATHER!!
MIDORI!
GYAAAHHH!!!

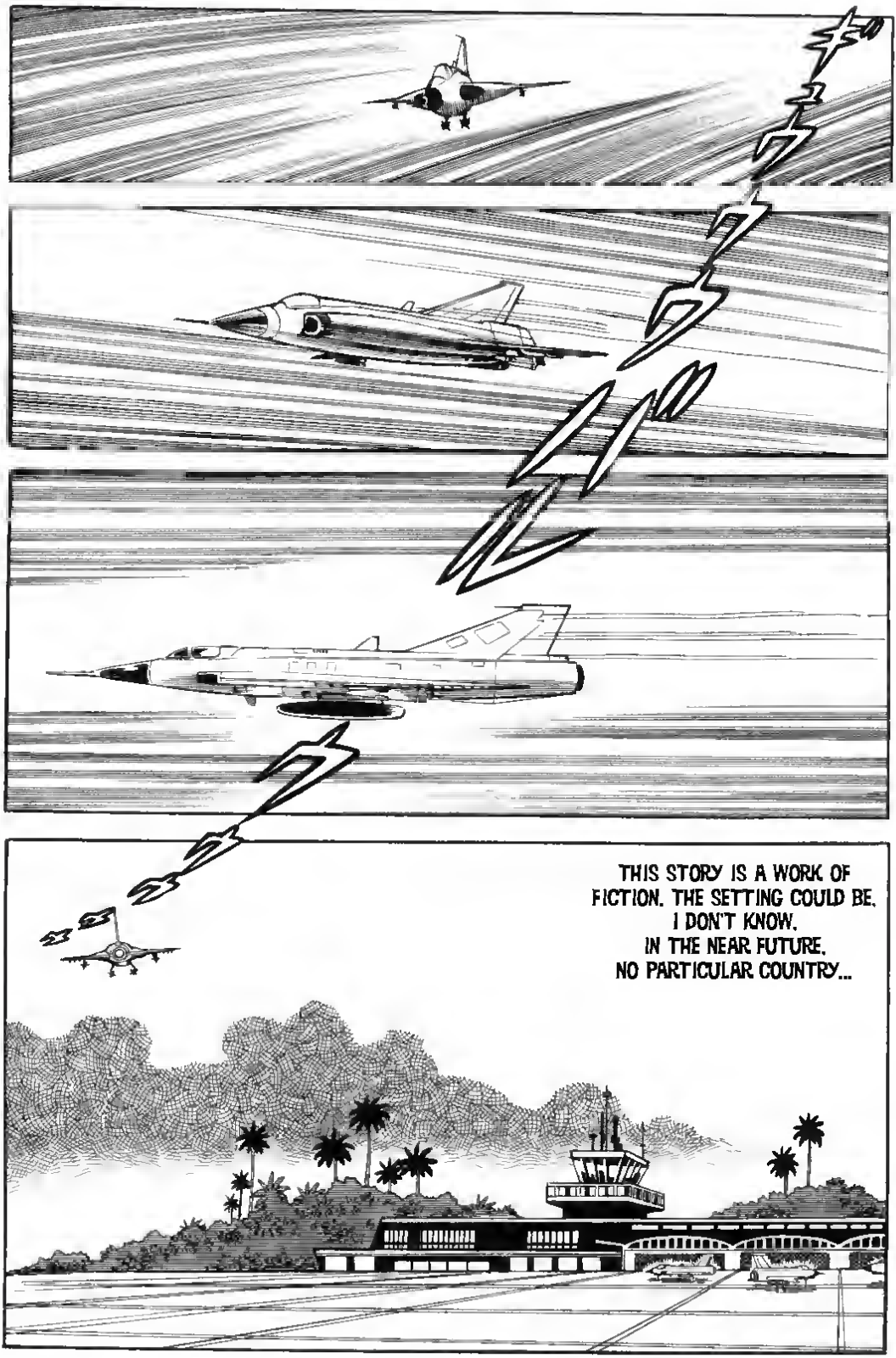

IF HE'S A NYMPH... HE SHOULD BE WEAK AGAINST FIRE!
THAT'S IT!
バシャ
GWWOOOHHH!!!!

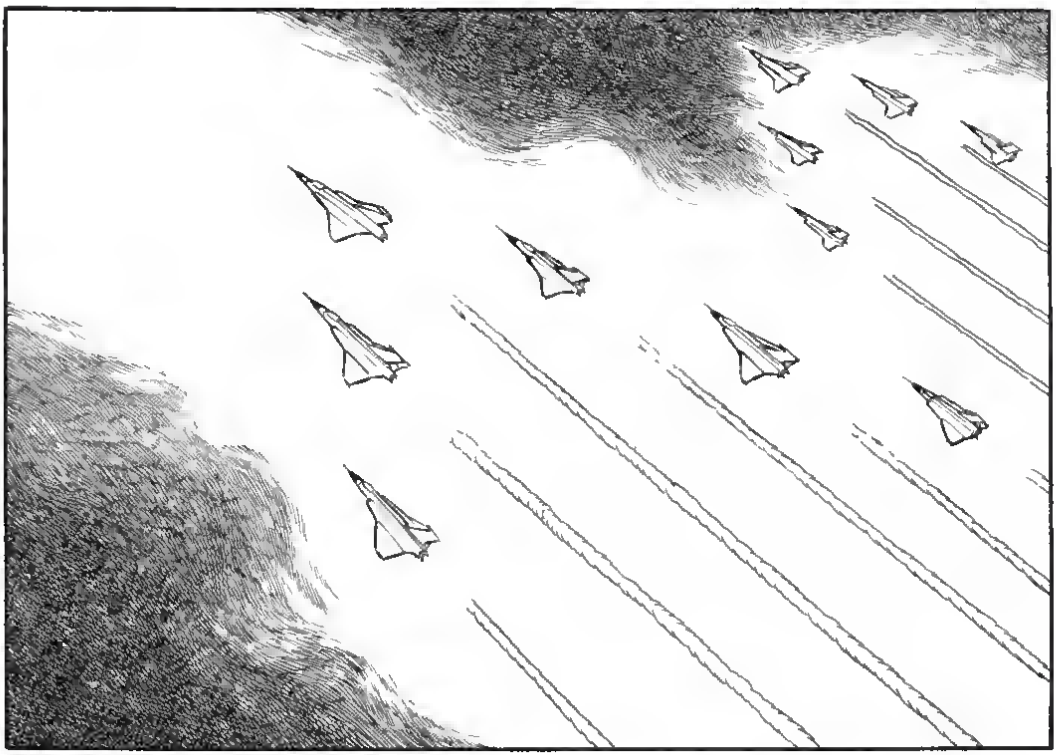

NOW'S OUR CHANCE! EVERYONE, ESCAPE!!



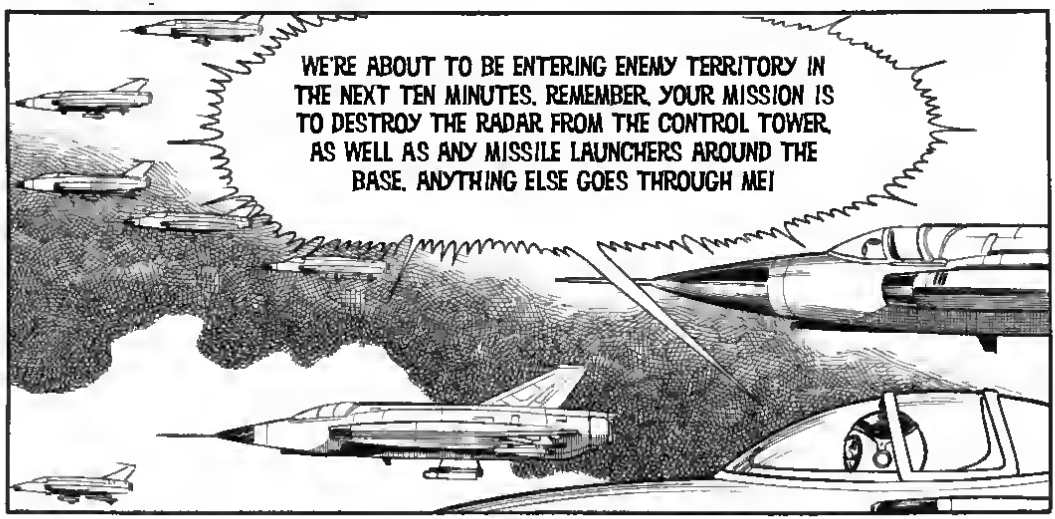
BUT BRUNNEN'S CAFE...! IT WAS GONE. NOT EVEN A TRACE OF IT LEFT...
THE NEXT MORNING I WOKE UP FACE DOWN IN THE ROAD. SUNLIGHT PUSHING ON MY FACE... THE WORLD WAS SO WARM IT FELT UNREAL...

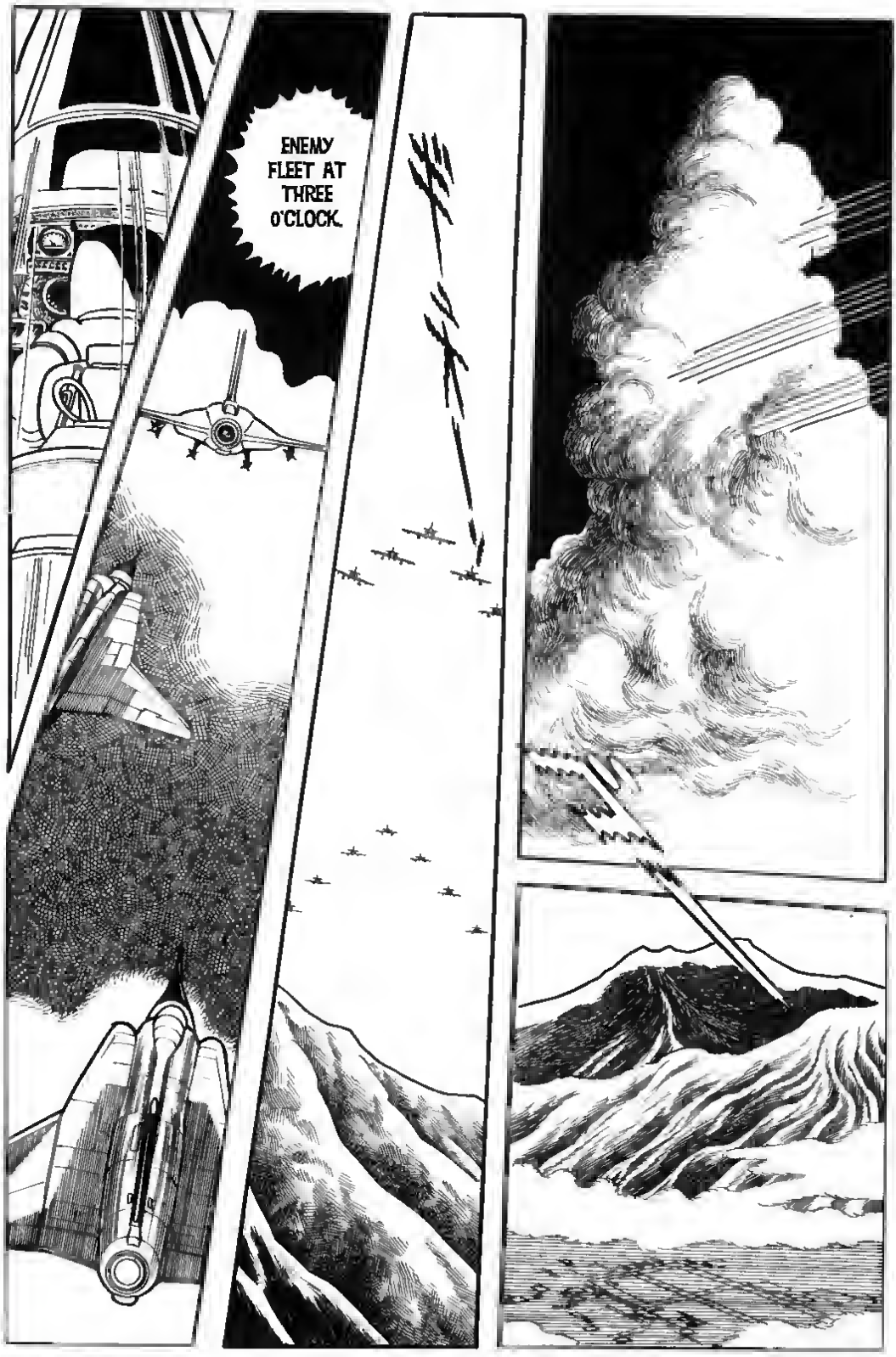

MAYBE IT WAS A DREAM...? BUT MAYBE NOT. BECAUSE THE NEXT TIME WE WENT TO TRAIN THERE..
I WAS ABLE TO HITCH A RIDE HOME. THE EVENTS OF YESTERDAY FELT LIKE THEY WERE ALL A DREAM.
AND BRUNNEN'S CAFE WAS IN THE SAME PLACE IT ALWAYS WAS... BUT... MIDORI-CHAN WAS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND. THE MANAGER HAD CHANGED THE WHOLE STORE HAD CHANGED TO A BORING TYPICAL RESTAURANT. NO ONE EVER HEARD FROM MIDORI AGAIN...

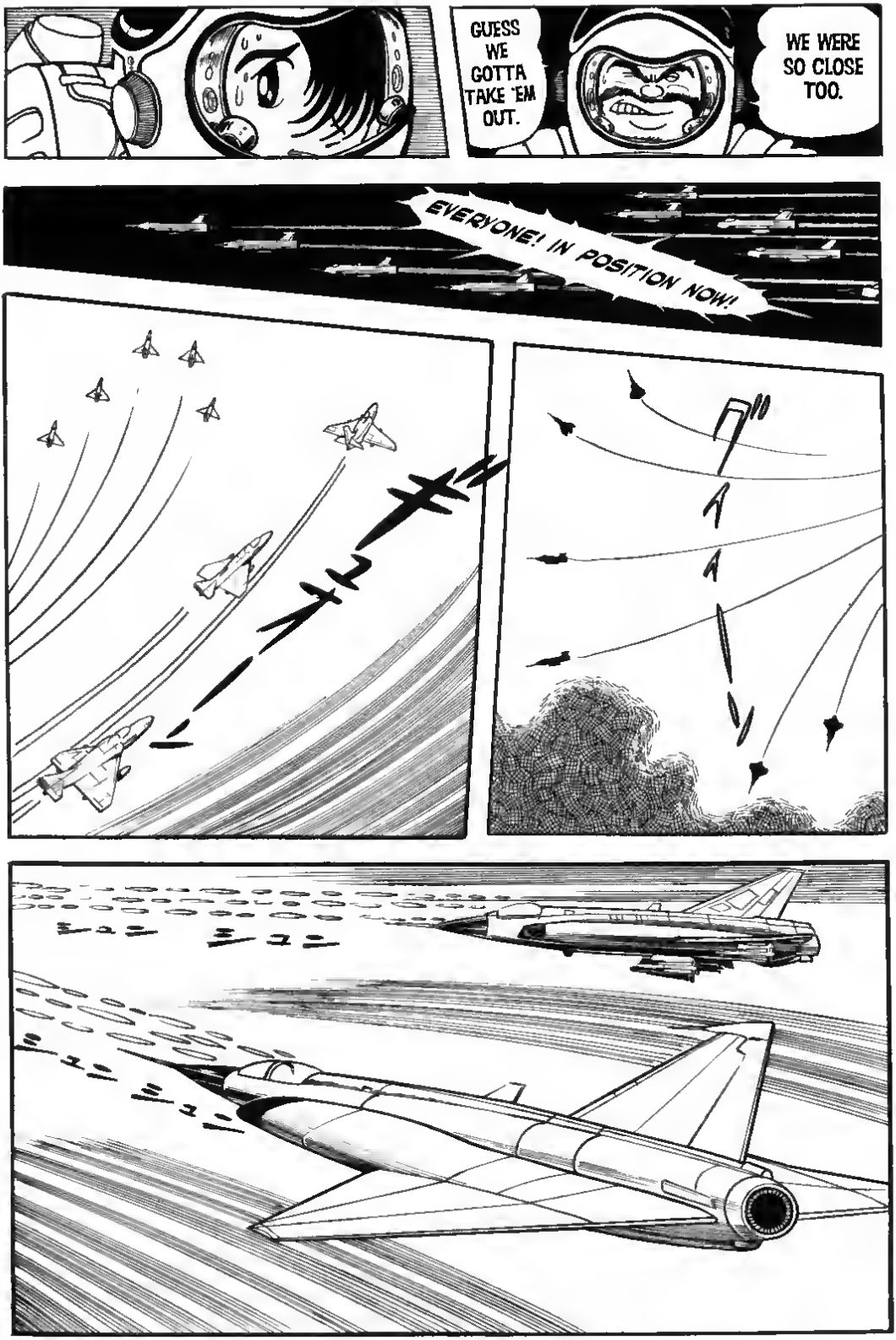

THIS STORY IS A WORK OF FICTION. THE SETTING COULD BE, I DON'T KNOW, IN THE NEAR FUTURE, NO PARTICULAR COUNTRY...

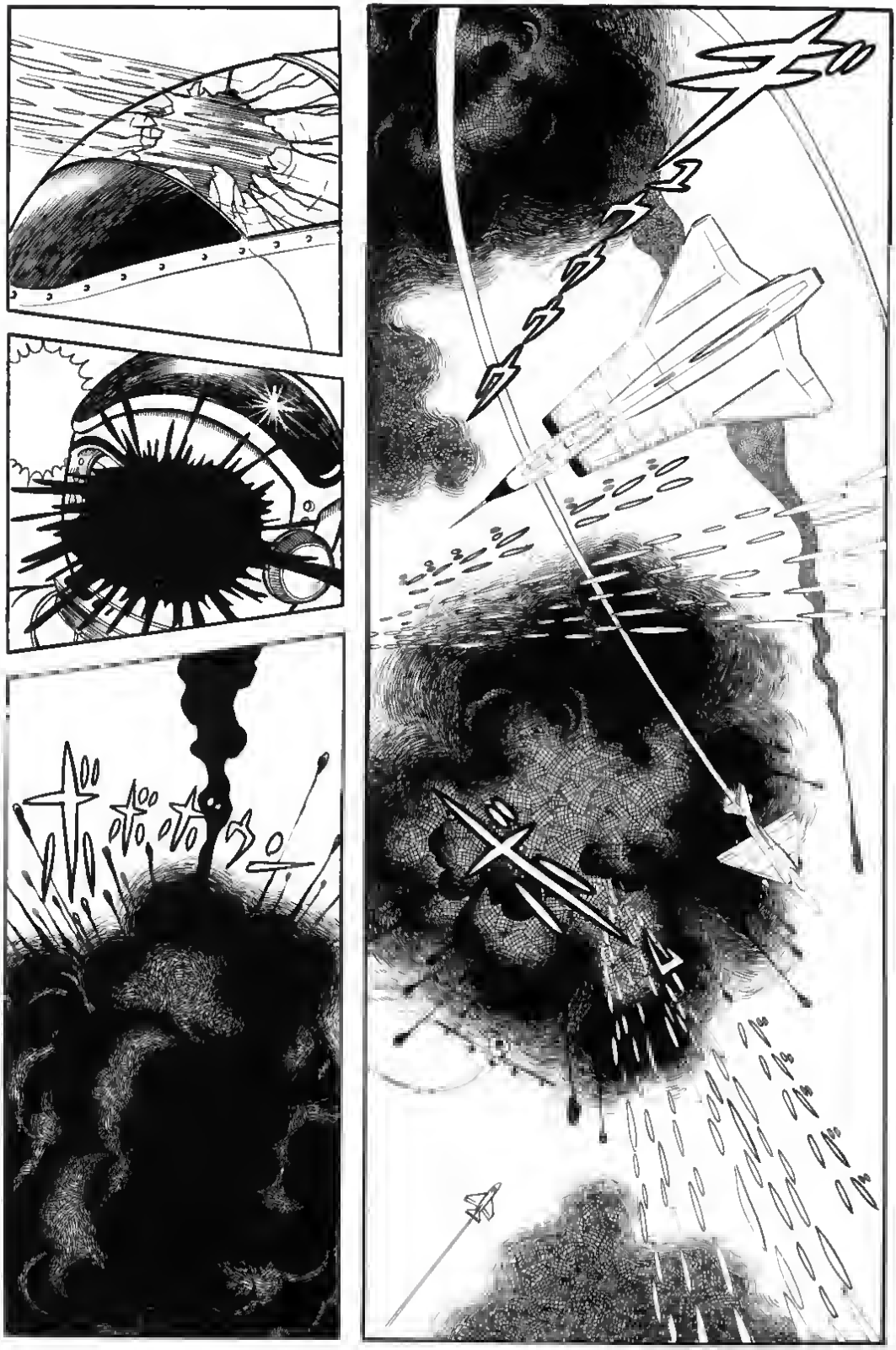


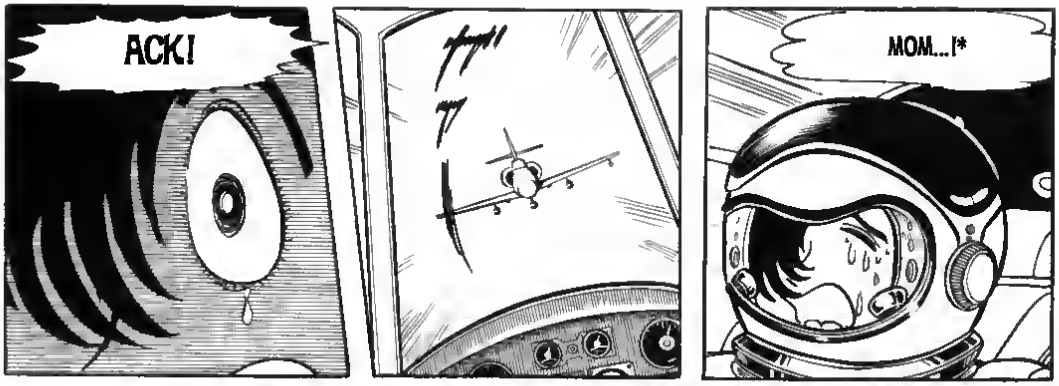
GOOD. NOW ...
U, UMM ...
OKUNO!
ENOK!!
ALL CLEAR SIR!
YAMADA!
GOOD HERE!
SA!!


WE'RE ABOUT TO BE ENTERING ENEMY TERRITORY IN THE NEXT TEN MINUTES. REMEMBER, YOUR MISSION IS TO DESTROY THE RADAR FROM THE CONTROL TOWER, AS WELL AS ANY MISSILE LAUNCHERS AROUND THE BASE. ANYTHING ELSE GOES THROUGH ME!

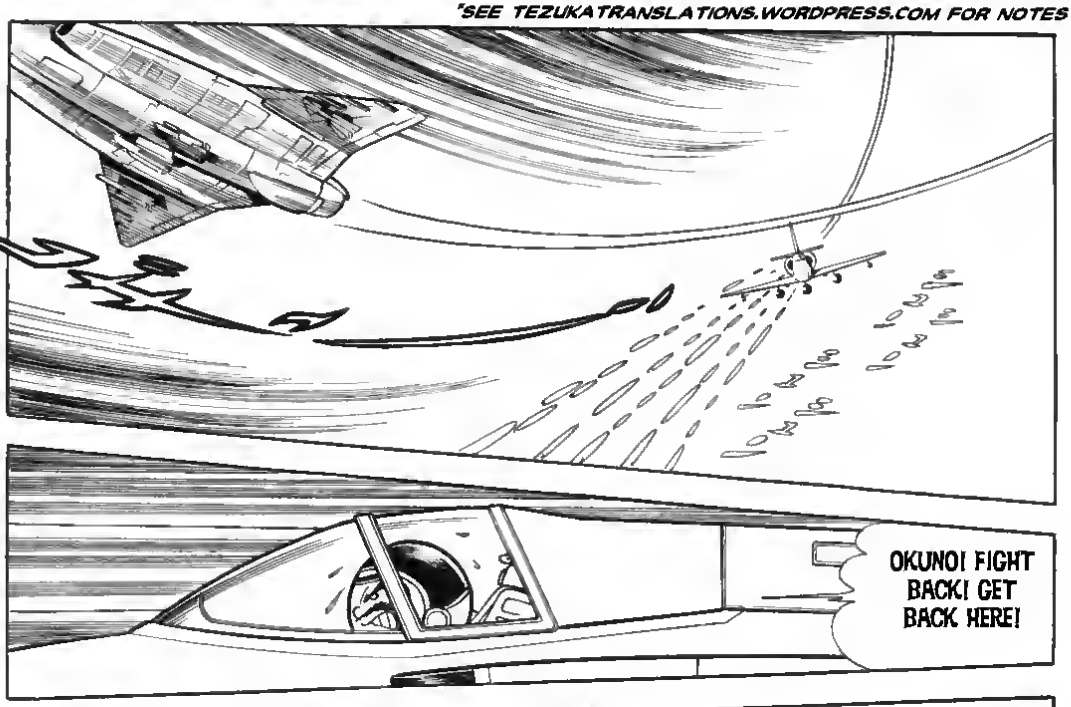

ENEMY FLEET AT THREE O'CLOCK.

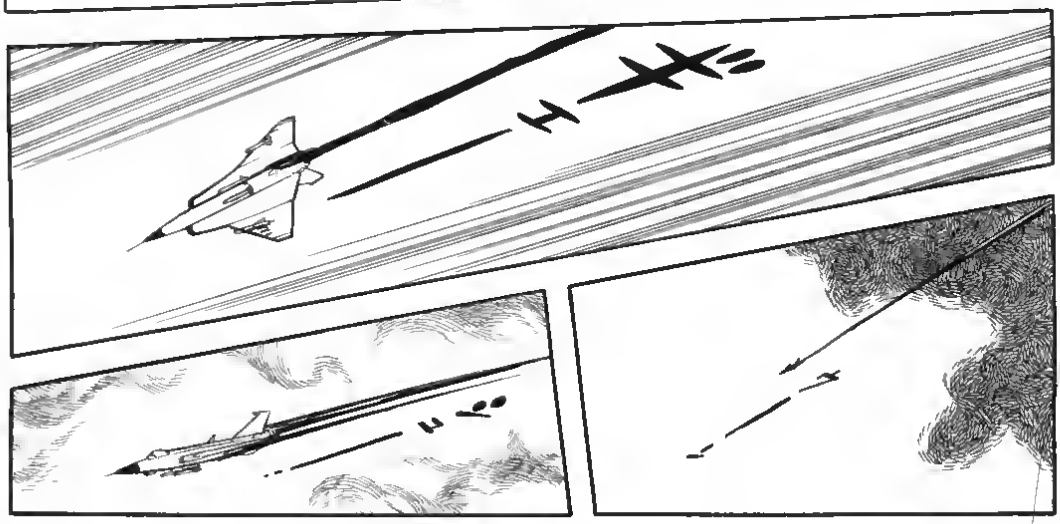

GUESS WE GOTTA TAKE 'EM OUT.
WE WERE SO CLOSE TOO.
EVERYONE! IN POSITION NOW!

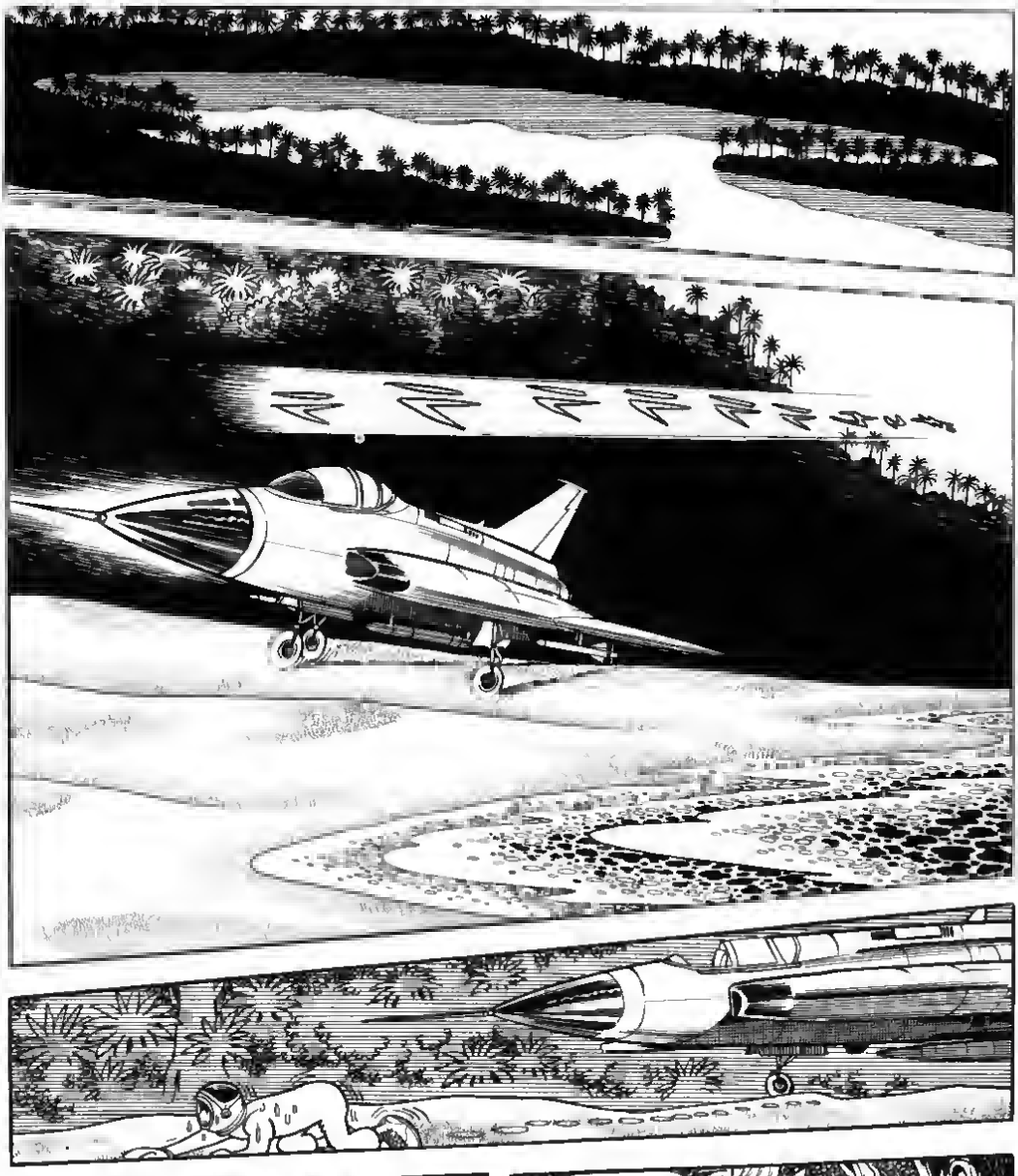




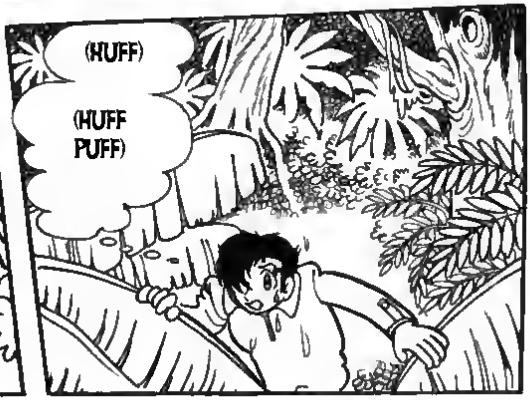
*SEE TEZUKATRANSLATIONS.WORDPRESS.COM FOR NOTES

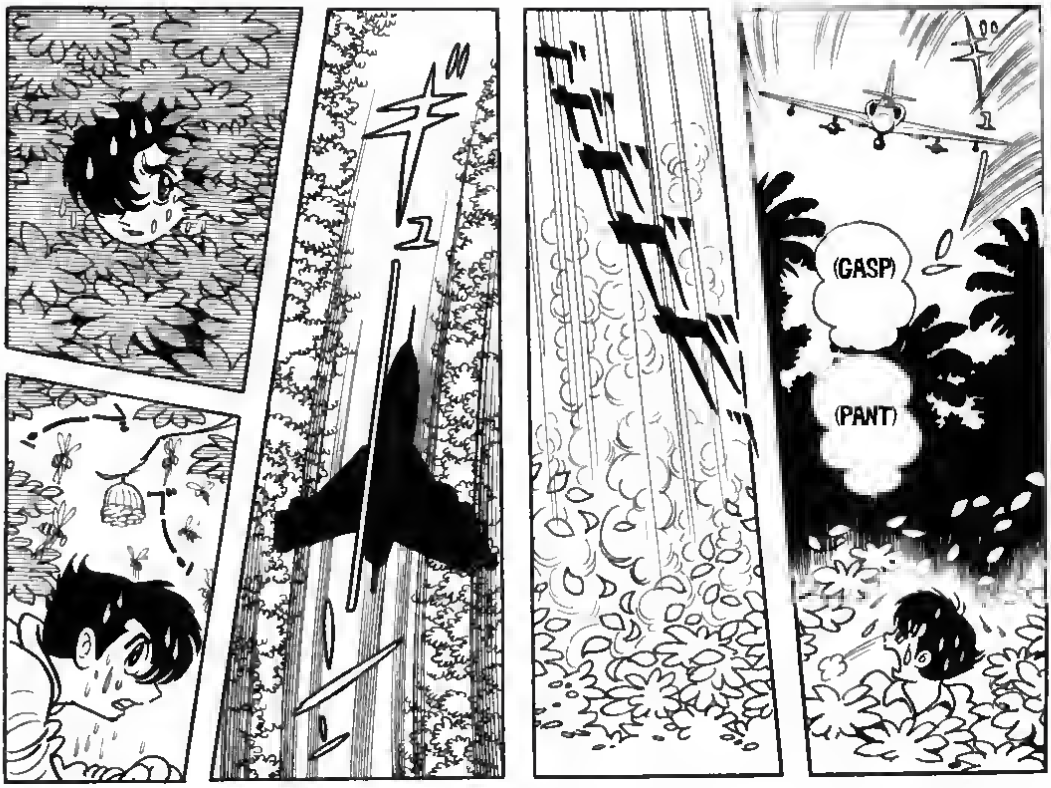






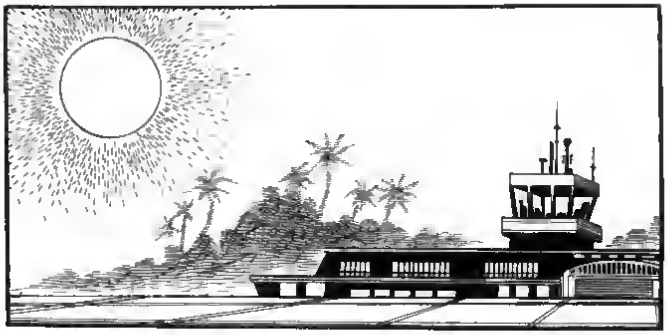
(PANT)
(PANT)


(HUFF)
(HUFF PUFF)

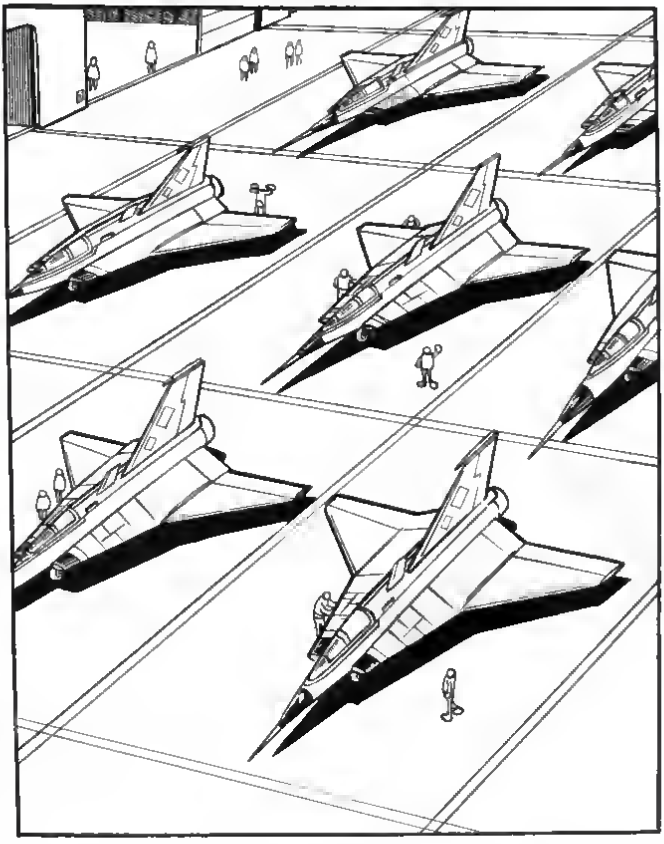

(GASP)
(PANT)

WHEW.

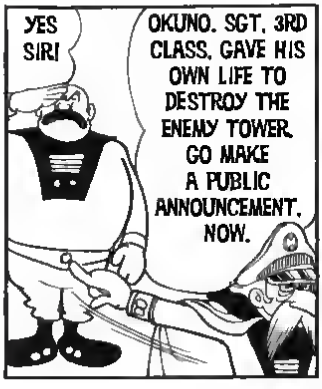
HAVE WE FOUND OKUNO'S SHIP YET?

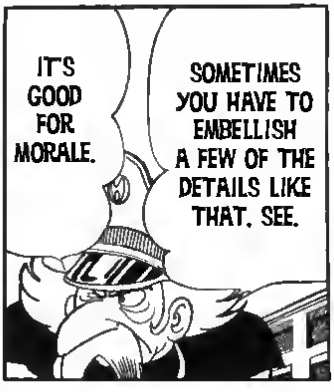


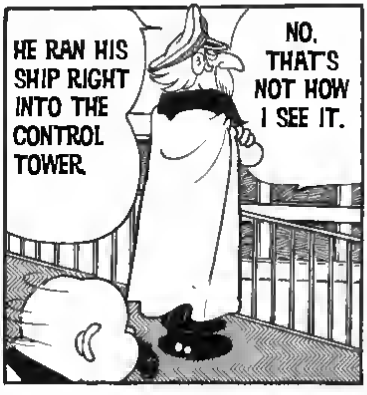
HIS COLLEAGUES WHO MADE IT BACK HAVE SAID THEY SAW SMOKE COMING FROM OKUNO'S PLANE...

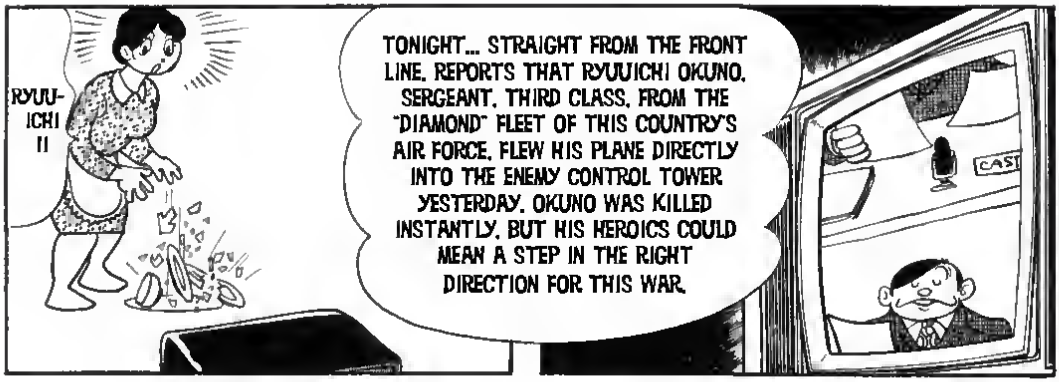


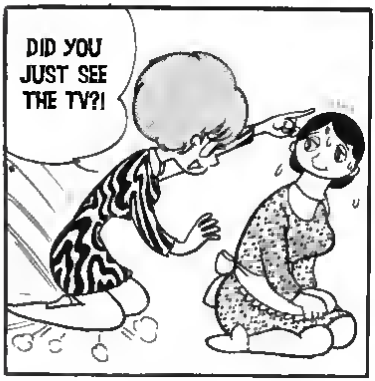
MOST LIKELY IT CRASH-LANDED ON AN ISLAND NEAR...
AND ...?

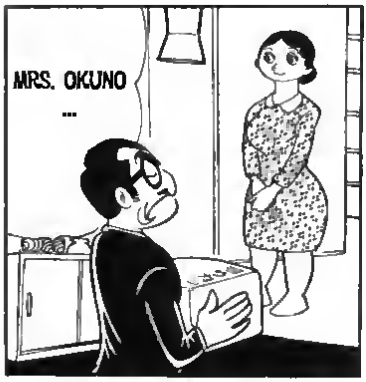

YES SIR!
OKUNO. SGT. 3RD CLASS. GAVE HIS OWN LIFE TO DESTROY THE ENEMY TOWER. GO MAKE A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT. NOW.

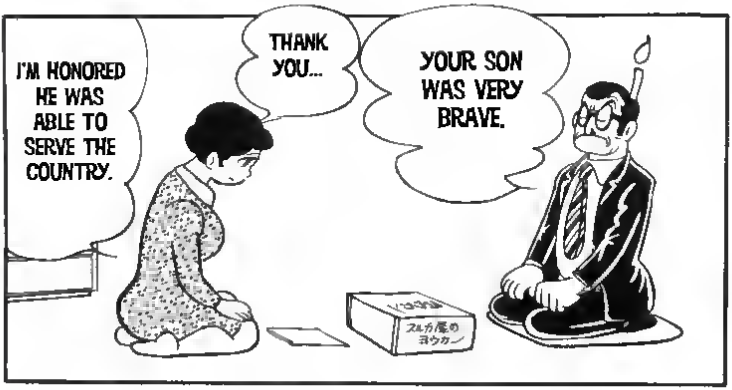

IT'S GOOD FOR MORALE.
SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO EMBELLISH A FEW OF THE DETAILS LIKE THAT. SEE.

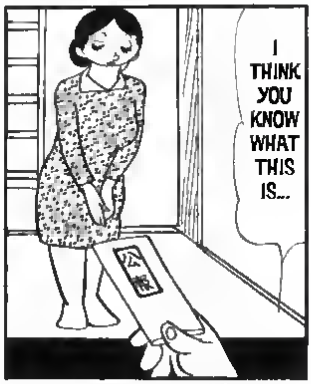

HE RAN HIS SHIP RIGHT INTO THE CONTROL TOWER.
NO. THAT'S NOT HOW I SEE IT.


RYUU-ICHI !!
TONIGHT... STRAIGHT FROM THE FRONT LINE, REPORTS THAT RYUUICHI OKUNO, SERGEANT, THIRD CLASS, FROM THE "DIAMOND" FLEET OF THIS COUNTRY'S AIR FORCE, FLEW HIS PLANE DIRECTLY INTO THE ENEMY CONTROL TOWER YESTERDAY. OKUNO WAS KILLED INSTANTLY, BUT HIS HEROICS COULD MEAN A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION FOR THIS WAR.
CAST



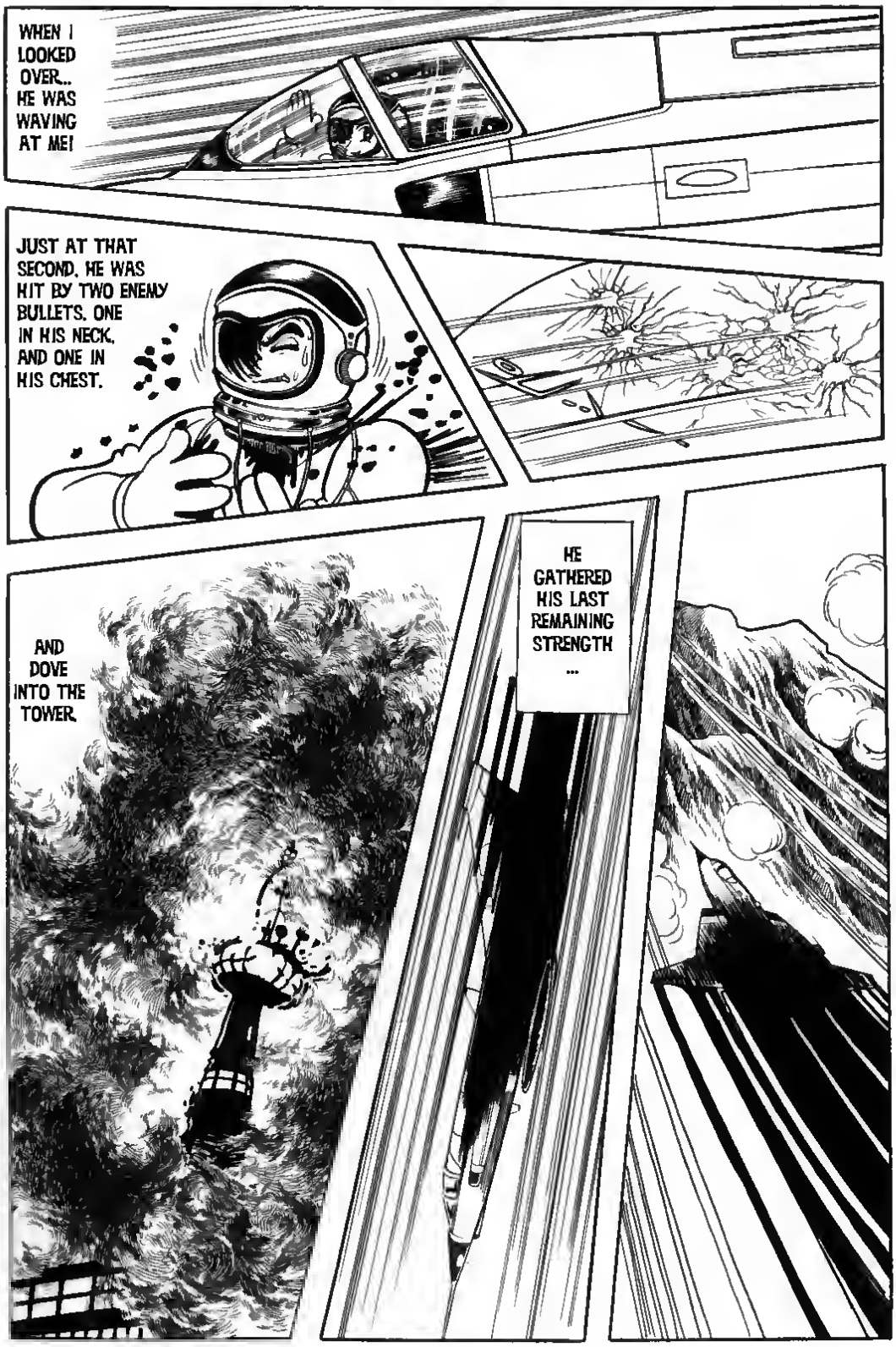




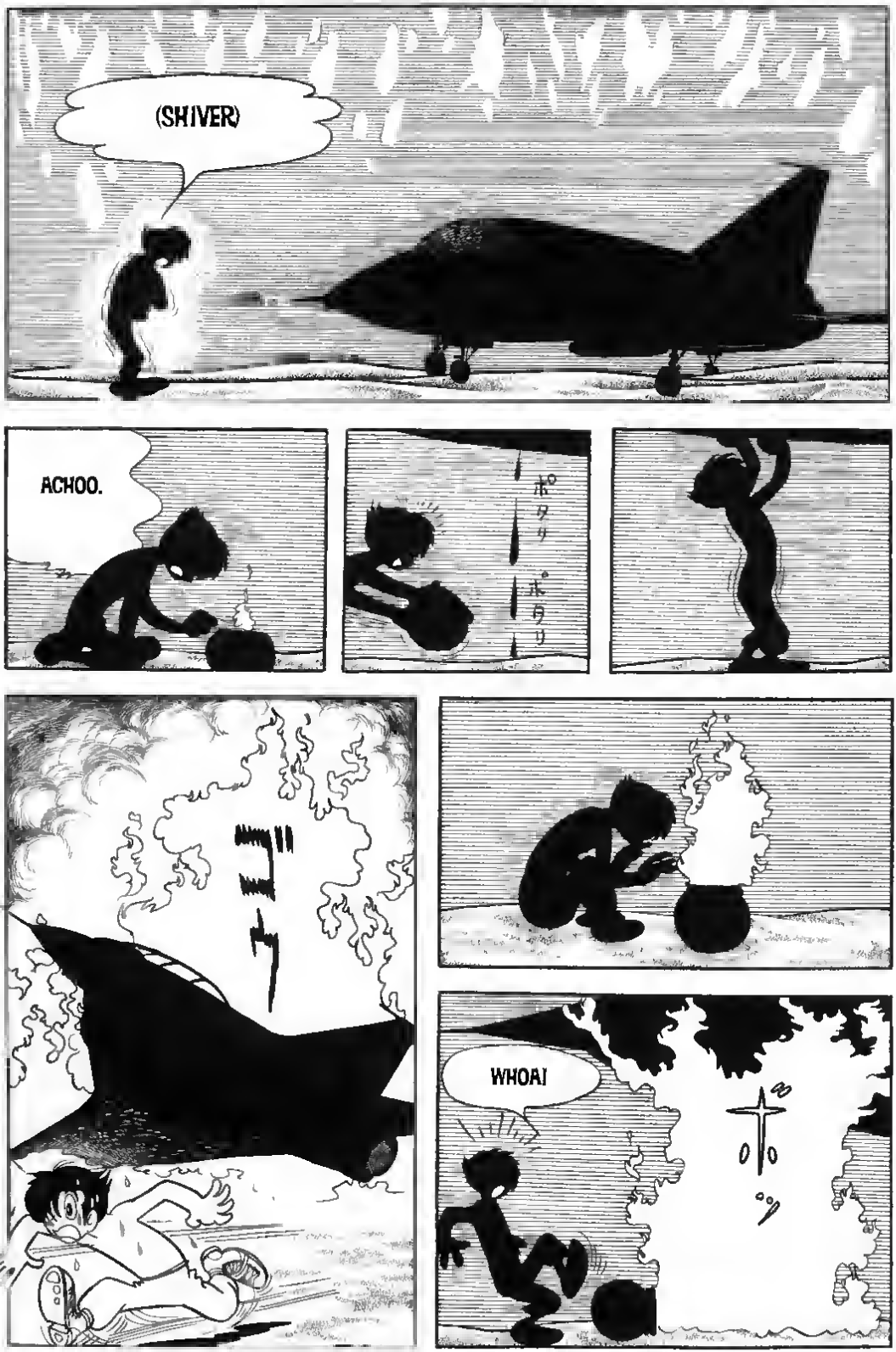


IT'S A DEATH CERTIFICATE.

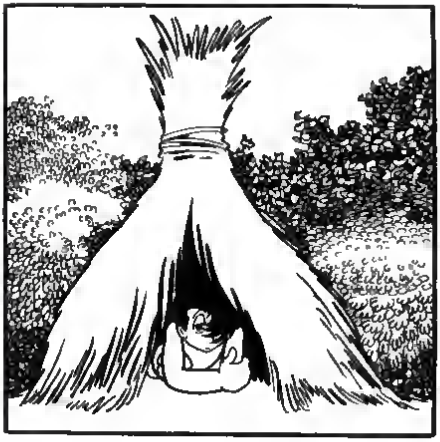
SHE'S TOUGH... DIDN'T EVEN SHED A SINGLE TEAR.
PLEASE, SAY NOTHING OF IT. I AM VERY PROUD OF RYUUICHI.
WE TRULY ARE SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS.
"OKUNO WAS HIT FROM ALL DIRECTIONS."
ALRIGHT THEN, LISTEN UP BRATS. HERE IS AN ENTRY FROM THE DIARY OF SOMEONE WHO WENT WITH OKUNO ON HIS LAST MISSION..
TEACHER! TELL US THE STORY ABOUT OKUNO AGAIN.

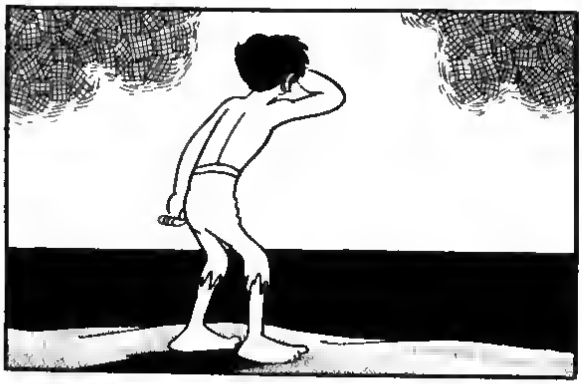

WHEN I LOOKED OVER... HE WAS WAVING AT ME!
JUST AT THAT SECOND, HE WAS HIT BY TWO ENEMY BULLETS. ONE IN HIS NECK, AND ONE IN HIS CHEST.
AND DOVE INTO THE TOWER.
HE GATHERED HIS LAST REMAINING STRENGTH ...

"OKUNO, YOU MAY BE GONE NOW, BUT YOU WILL LIVE ON IN ALL OF US, FOREVER..."
"I HAD NEVER SEEN SUCH A SELFLESS ACT."
I THINK I DID A PRETTY GOOD JOB WITH THAT LAST BIT, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF...
IT'S DONE WONDERS FOR MORALE, SIR.
REMEMBER OKUNO!!!
DON'T HAVE OKUNO'S SACRIFICE BE IN VAIN!!!

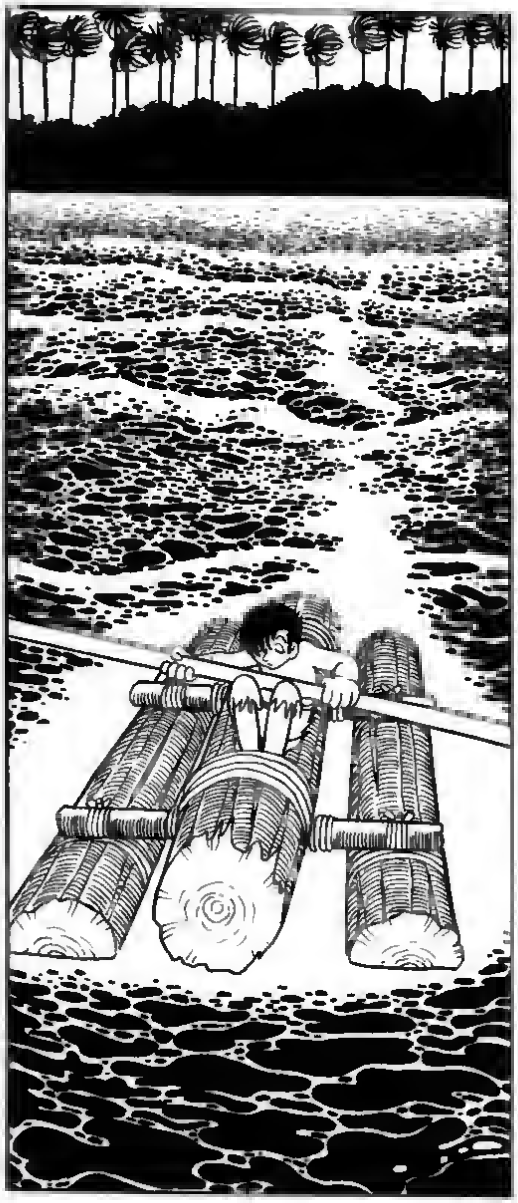

(SHIVER)
ACHOO.
ポタリ
ポタリ
ゴー
WHOA!

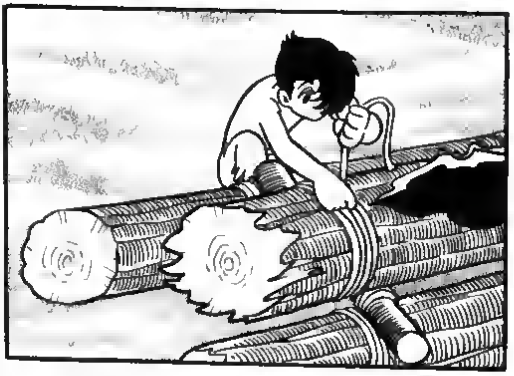
ドドドドドド!!

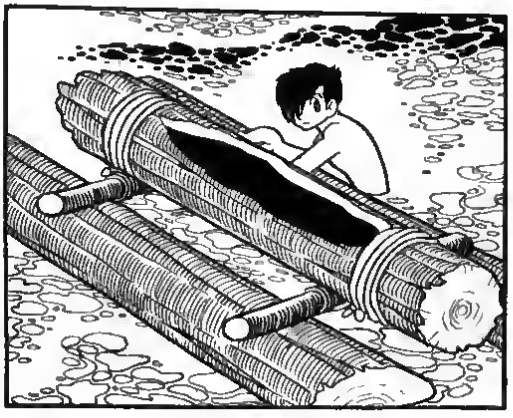


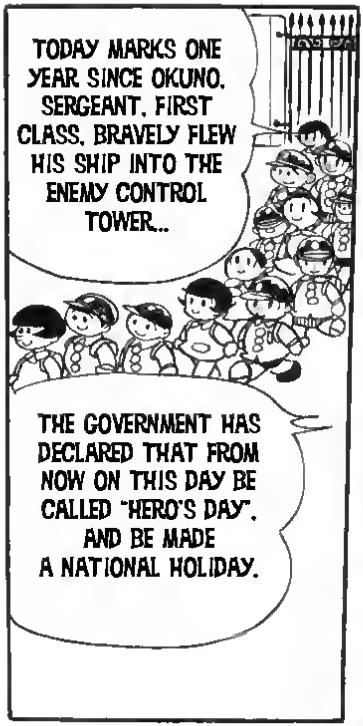


(MUNCH, MUNCH)

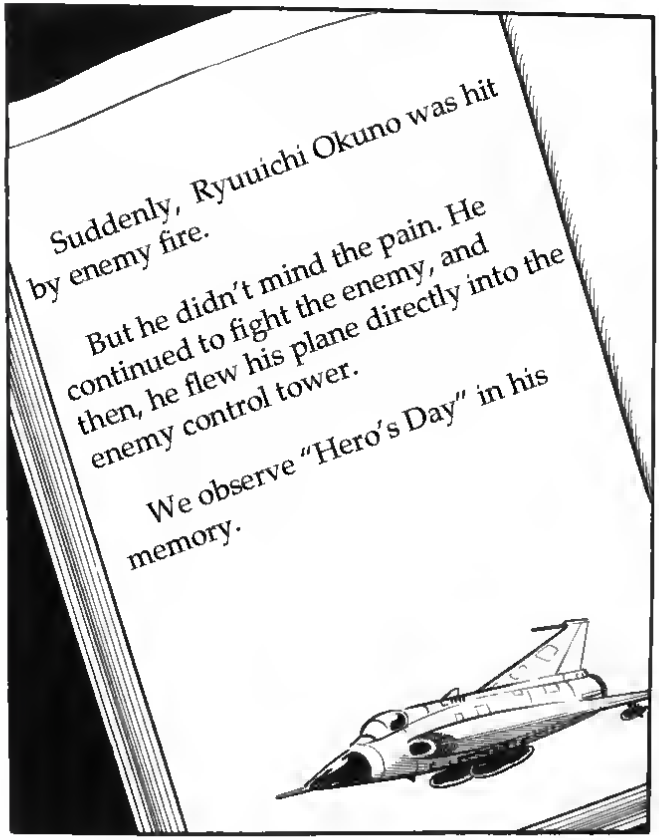


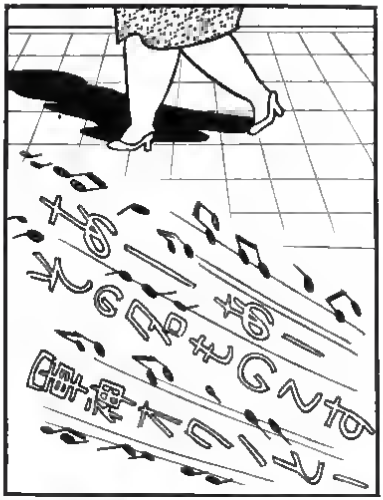


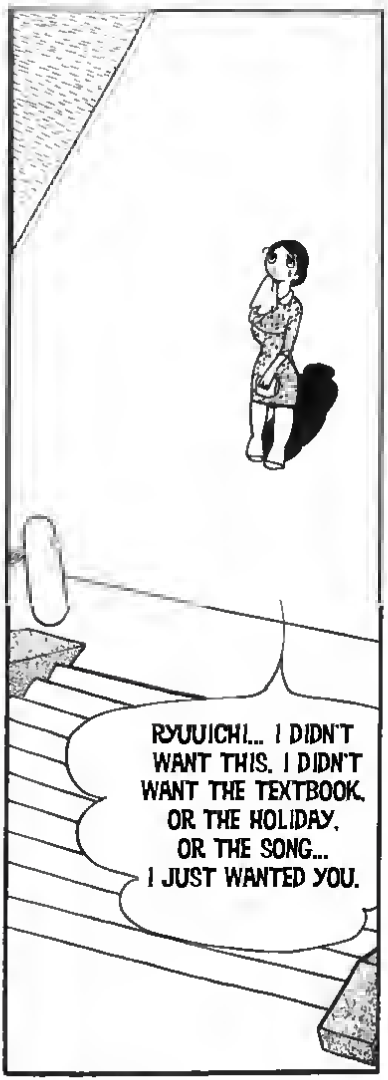


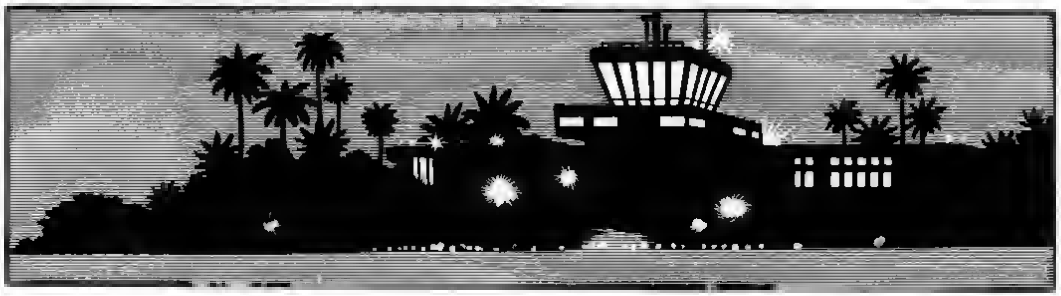

TODAY MARKS ONE YEAR SINCE OKUNO, SERGEANT, FIRST CLASS, BRAVELY FLEW HIS SHIP INTO THE ENEMY CONTROL TOWER...
THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECLARED THAT FROM NOW ON THIS DAY BE CALLED "HERO'S DAY", AND BE MADE A NATIONAL HOLIDAY.

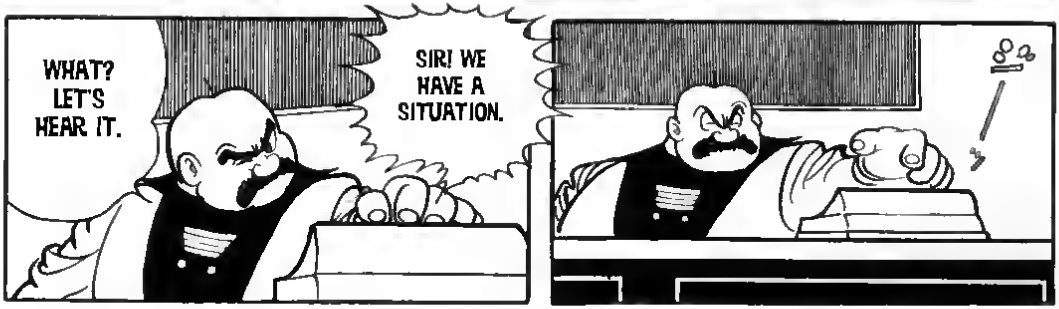
SONG: SEE TEZUKATRANSLATIONS.WORDPRESS.COM FOR TRANSLATION

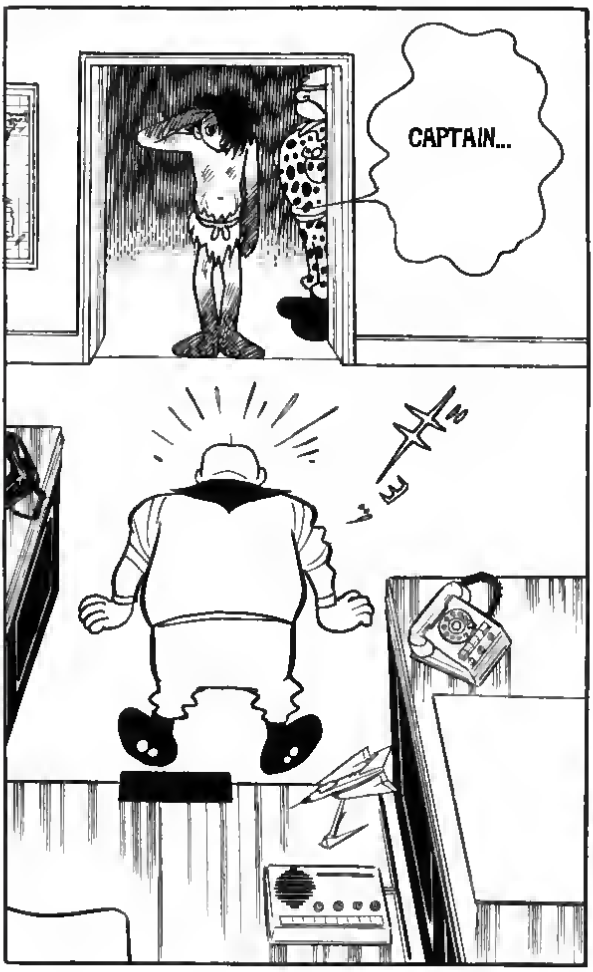

Suddenly, Ryuuichi Okuno was hit by enemy fire.
But he didn't mind the pain. He continued to fight the enemy, and then, he flew his plane directly into the enemy control tower.
We observe "Hero's Day" in his memory.

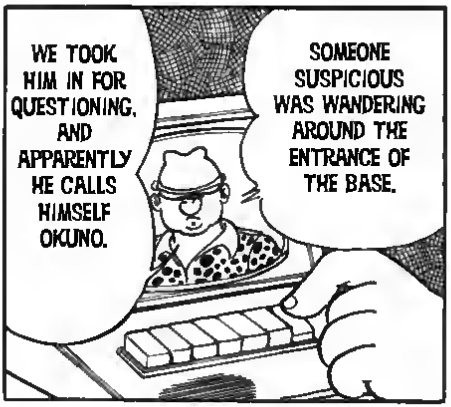



RYUUICHI... I DIDN'T WANT THIS. I DIDN'T WANT THE TEXTBOOK, OR THE HOLIDAY, OR THE SONG... I JUST WANTED YOU.

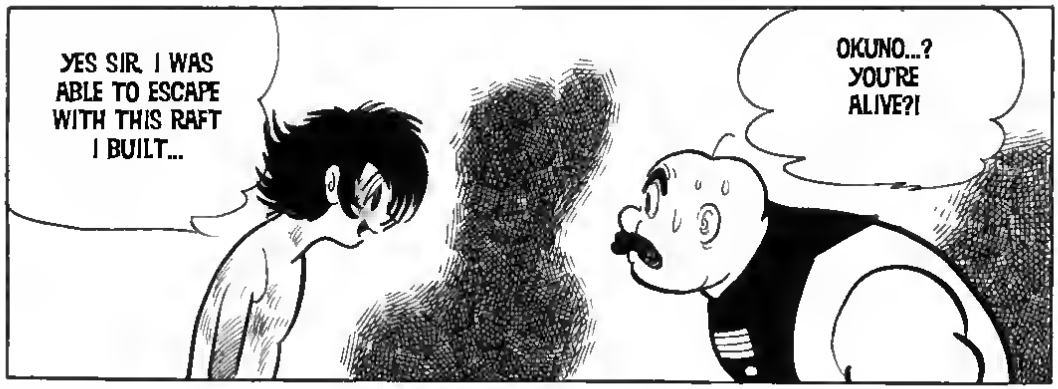


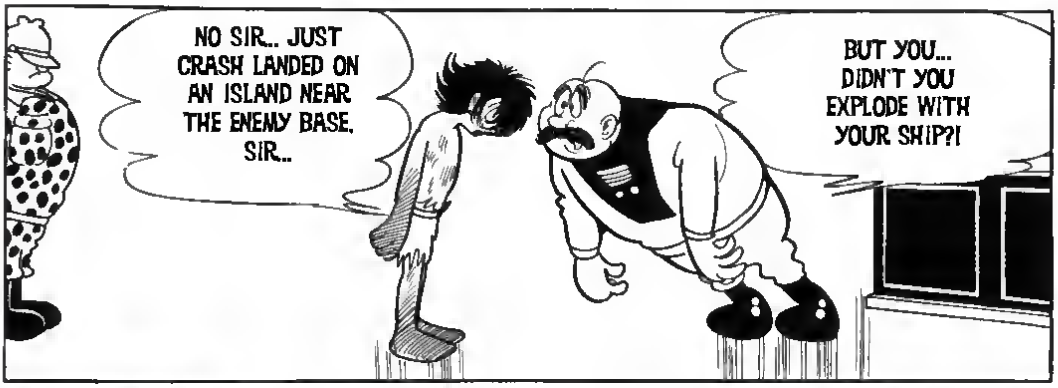

WHAT? LET'S HEAR IT.
SIR! WE HAVE A SITUATION.

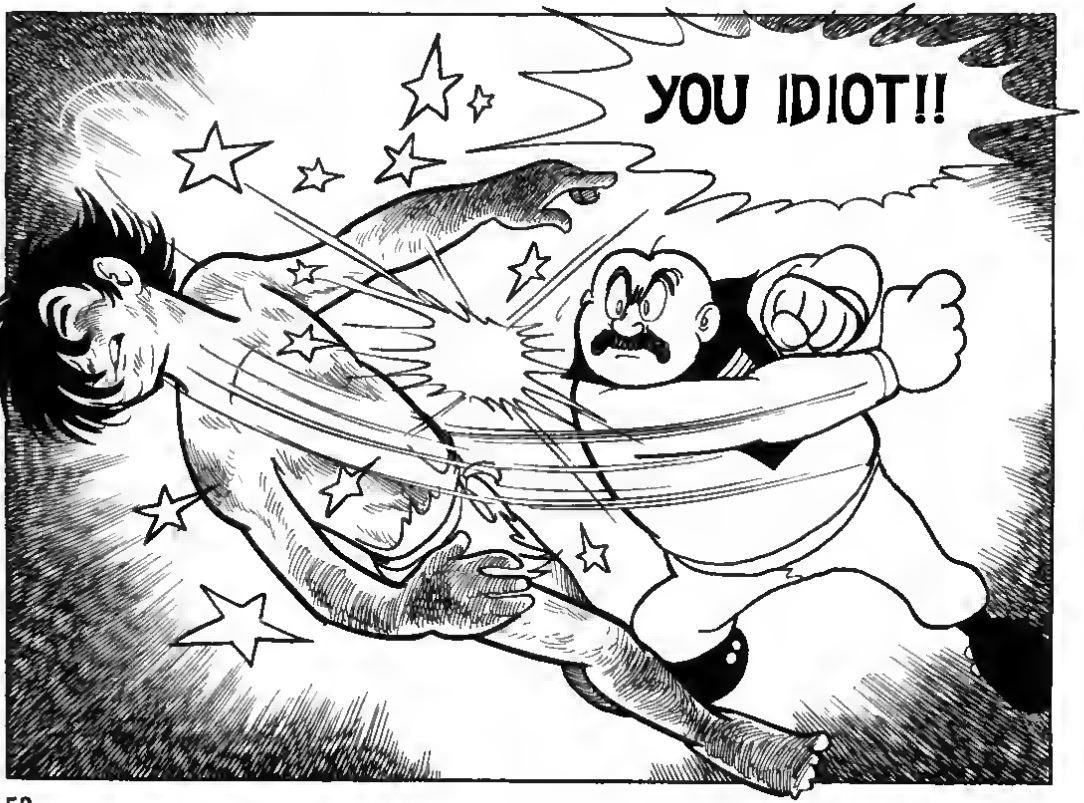

CAPTAIN...


WE TOOK HIM IN FOR QUESTIONING, AND APPARENTLY HE CALLS HIMSELF OKUNO.
SOMEONE SUSPICIOUS WAS WANDERING AROUND THE ENTRANCE OF THE BASE.

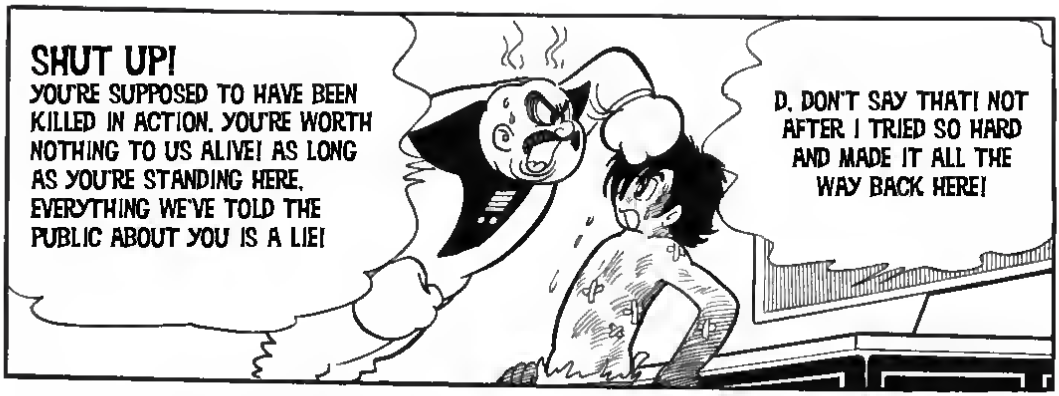
HMM. BRING HIM HERE.
YOUR ORDERS, SIR?


YES SIR. I WAS ABLE TO ESCAPE WITH THIS RAFT I BUILT...
OKUNO...? YOU'RE ALIVE?!

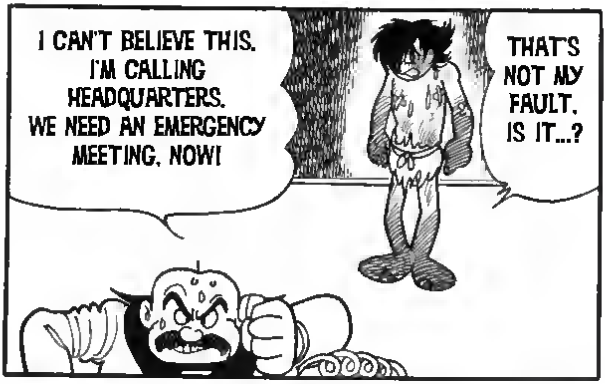

NO SIR.. JUST CRASH LANDED ON AN ISLAND NEAR THE ENEMY BASE, SIR..
BUT YOU... DIDN'T YOU EXPLODE WITH YOUR SHIP?!

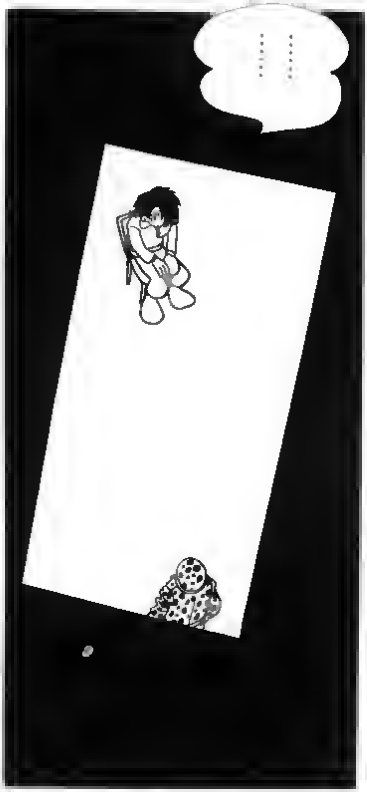

YOU IDIOT!!

DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU'VE DONE?!
?!
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT YOU'VE BECOME IN THIS COUNTRY!?
OKUNO!! YOU...
キョトン
WHY... WHY'D YOU HAVE TO COME BACK?!
WE MADE A HOLIDAY SONGS... YOU SHOULD SEE THE SIZE OF YOUR GRAVE!!!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO HAVE TAKEN A BULLET TO THE CHEST, CRASHED YOUR SHIP INTO THE TOWER, AND DIED!
???
NO. DIE AGAIN!
SHOULDN'T YOU JUST BE HAPPY THAT I'M ALIVE?
WELL IT'S NOT LIKE I COULD'VE KNOWN...


SHUT UP!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN KILLED IN ACTION. YOU'RE WORTH NOTHING TO US ALIVE! AS LONG AS YOU'RE STANDING HERE, EVERYTHING WE'VE TOLD THE PUBLIC ABOUT YOU IS A LIE!
D, DON'T SAY THAT! NOT AFTER I TRIED SO HARD AND MADE IT ALL THE WAY BACK HERE!

GET ME THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF...


I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS. I'M CALLING HEADQUARTERS. WE NEED AN EMERGENCY MEETING, NOW!
THAT'S NOT MY FAULT, IS IT...?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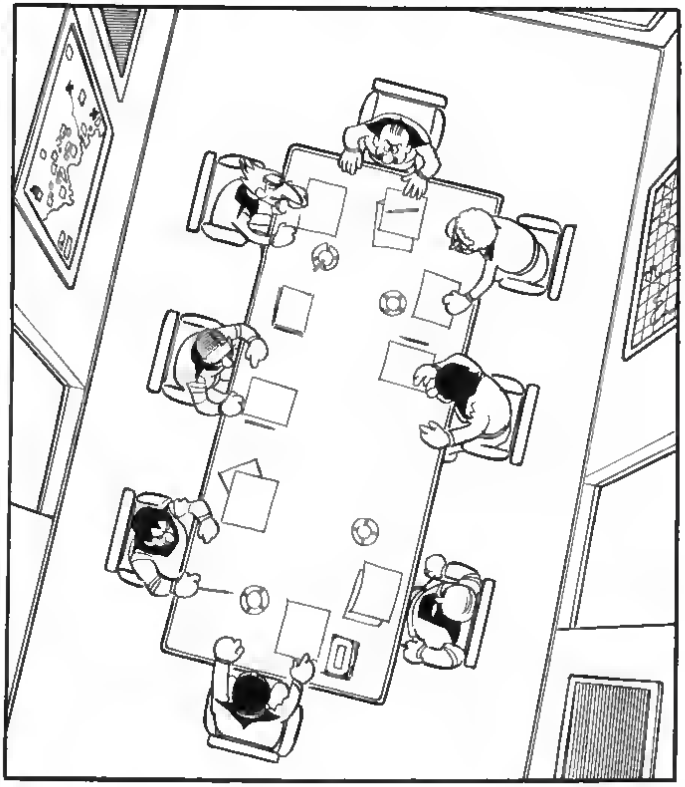
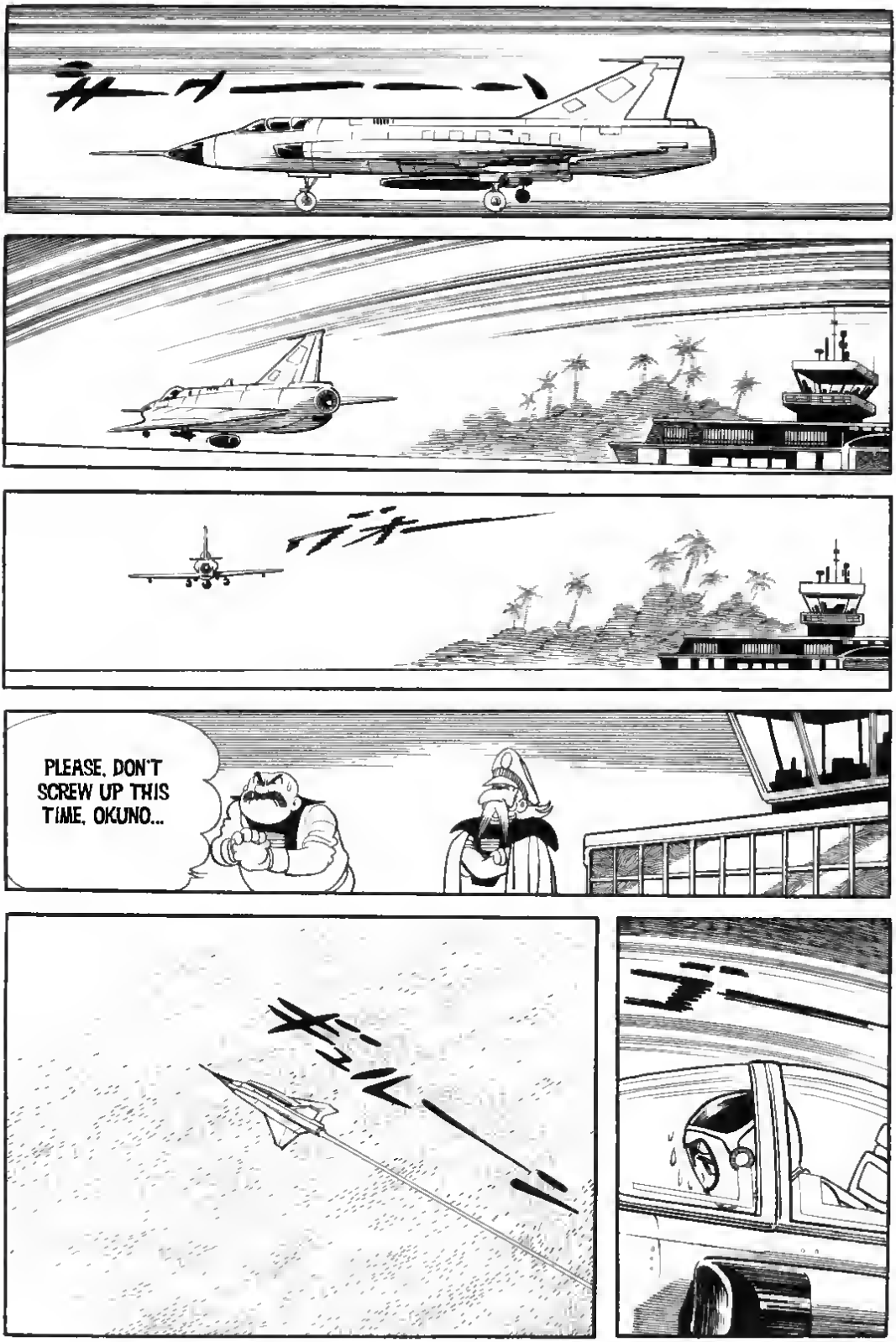
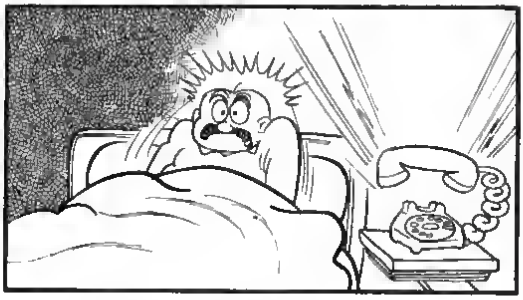


PLEASE DIE THIS TIME.
OKUNO, YOU'RE FLYING BACK TO THE ENEMY BASE.
WE'VE MADE OUR DECISION.
WHY ME? ISN'T THERE ANYBODY ELSE? I...
YES, JUST LIKE WE WROTE IT IN THE SCENARIO. FIRST, TAKE TWO BULLETS, IN YOUR NECK AND CHEST... THEN DIVE INTO THE CONTROL TOWER! DO THAT AND THEN YOU'LL BE A HERO. A REAL HERO, THIS TIME.
PLEASE! I DON'T WANT TO BE A HERO!
NO! IT'S GOING TO BE YOU! RYUUICHI OKUNO.

...
GET UP, OKUNO. YOU'RE GOING.
TRAITOR TO YOUR OWN COUNTRY...
HOW DARE YOU...
GIVE US A SMILE, BOY.


PLEASE, DON'T SCREW UP THIS TIME, OKUNO...

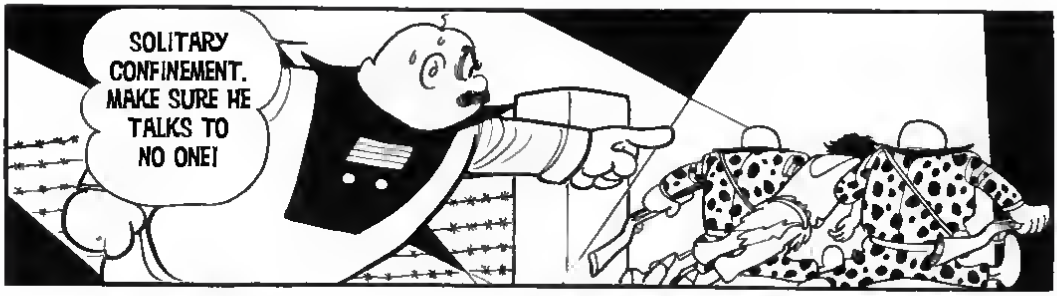
AGAIN?!
WE FOUND SOMEONE IN FRONT OF THE BASE ...



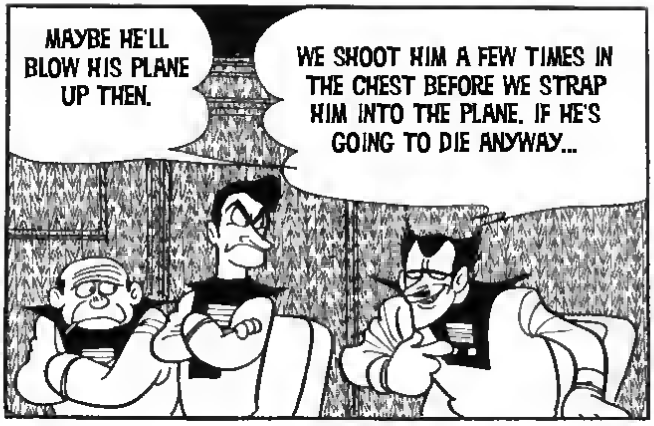
I USED THE PARACHUTE ...

YOU WANT TO TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE DOING BACK HERE?!?

YOU'RE SCUM, OKUNO!!


SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. MAKE SURE HE TALKS TO NO ONE!

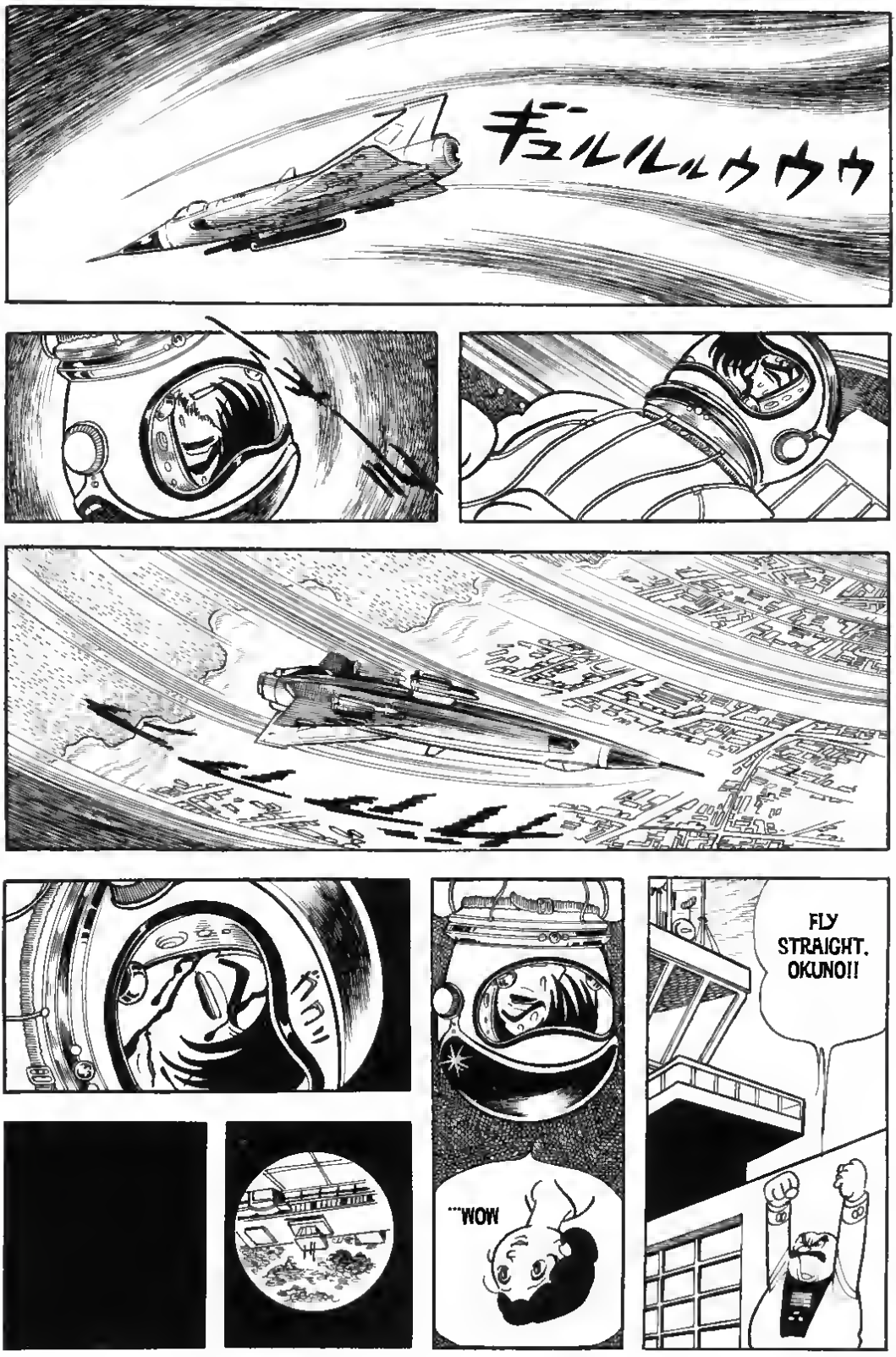
HOW ABOUT ...
IT SEEMS THAT HE HAS NO INTENTION OF GIVING HIS LIFE FOR HIS COUNTRY.
NOW WHAT?


MAYBE HE'LL BLOW HIS PLANE UP THEN.
WE SHOOT HIM A FEW TIMES IN THE CHEST BEFORE WE STRAP HIM INTO THE PLANE. IF HE'S GOING TO DIE ANYWAY...

NOT MY TASTE, PERSONALLY, BUT SINCE WE HAVE NO OTHER OPTIONS...

ANYONE OBJECT?

HI.
HURRY UP OR HE MIGHT PASS OUT.
STRAP HIM IN.
NO... PLEASE... I DON'T WANT TO DIE. PLEASE...!!
YOU'RE GOING TO BE A HERO. YOU GOT IT?
DON'T GIVE US ANY CRAP THIS TIME, OKUNO!


ギュルルルウウ
FLY STRAIGHT. OKUNO!!
...WOW

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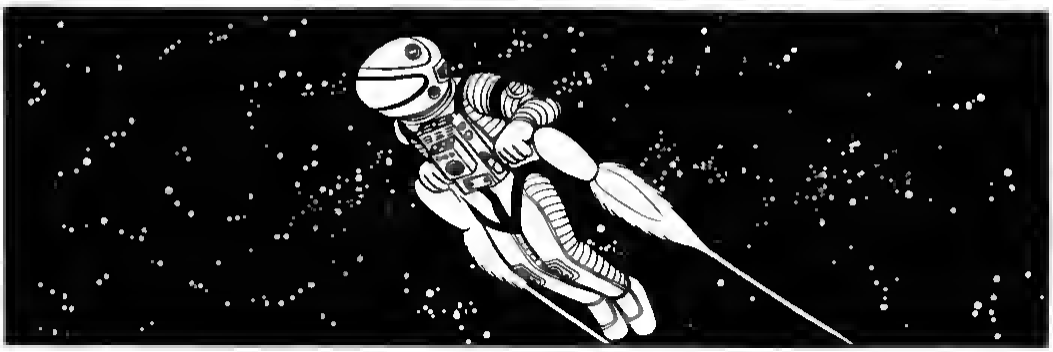
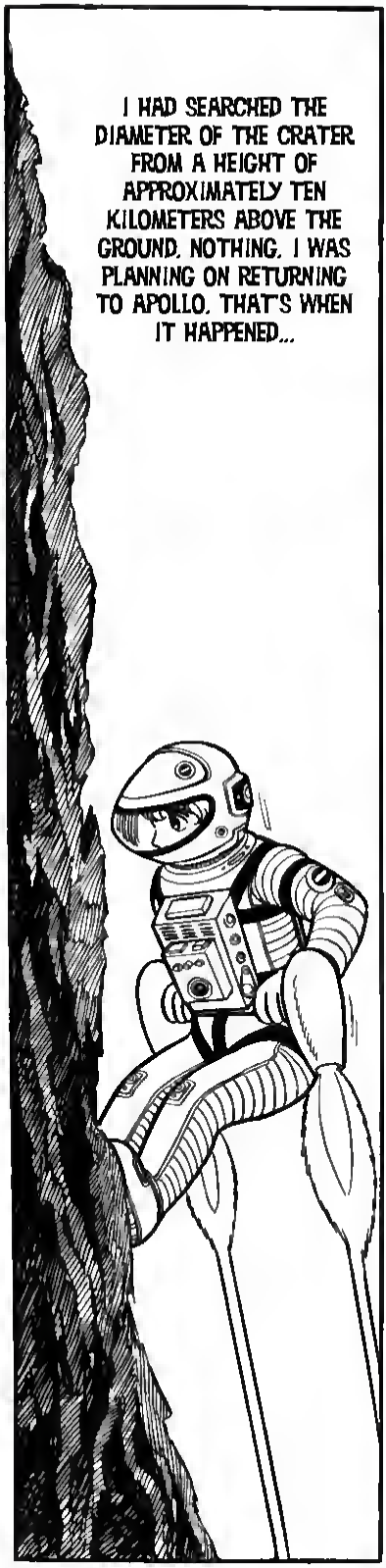
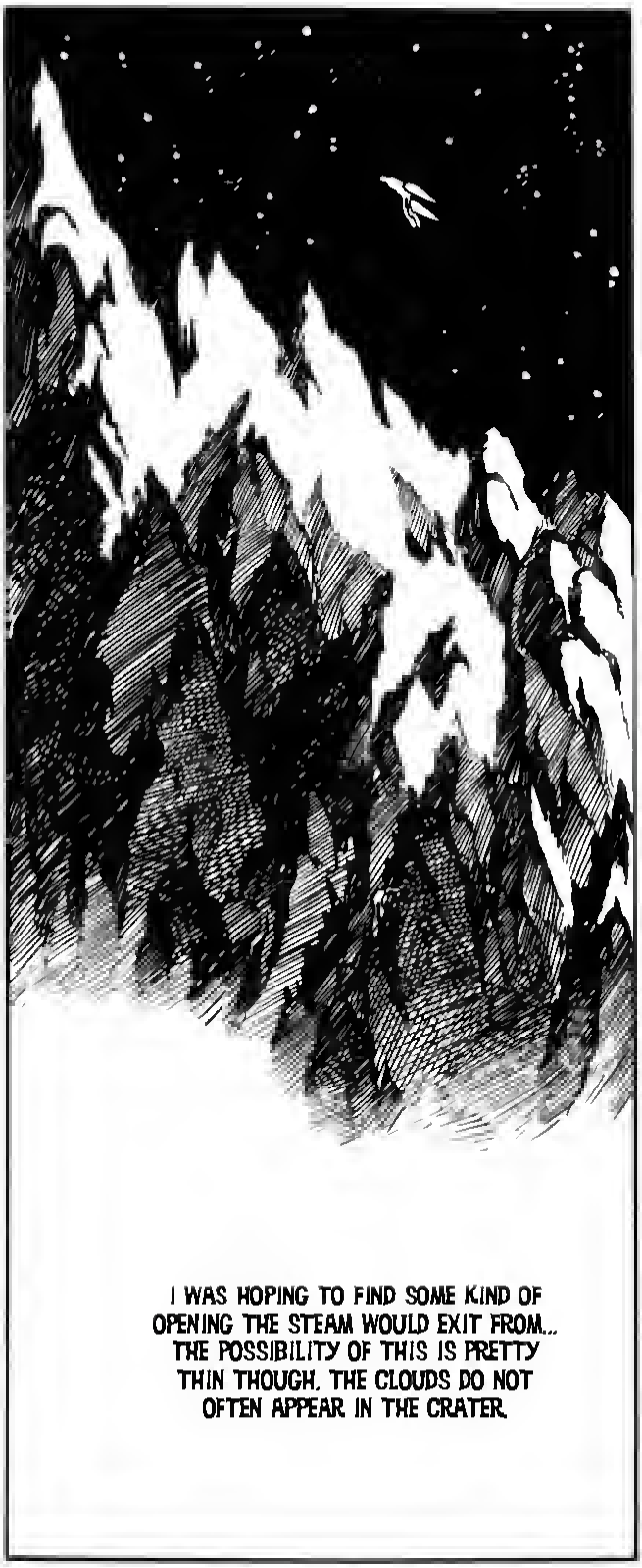
MY NAME IS WILLIAM FROST. PEOPLE CALL ME WILLY.
I AM FOREVER AT THE MOON'S ALPHONSUS CRATER...

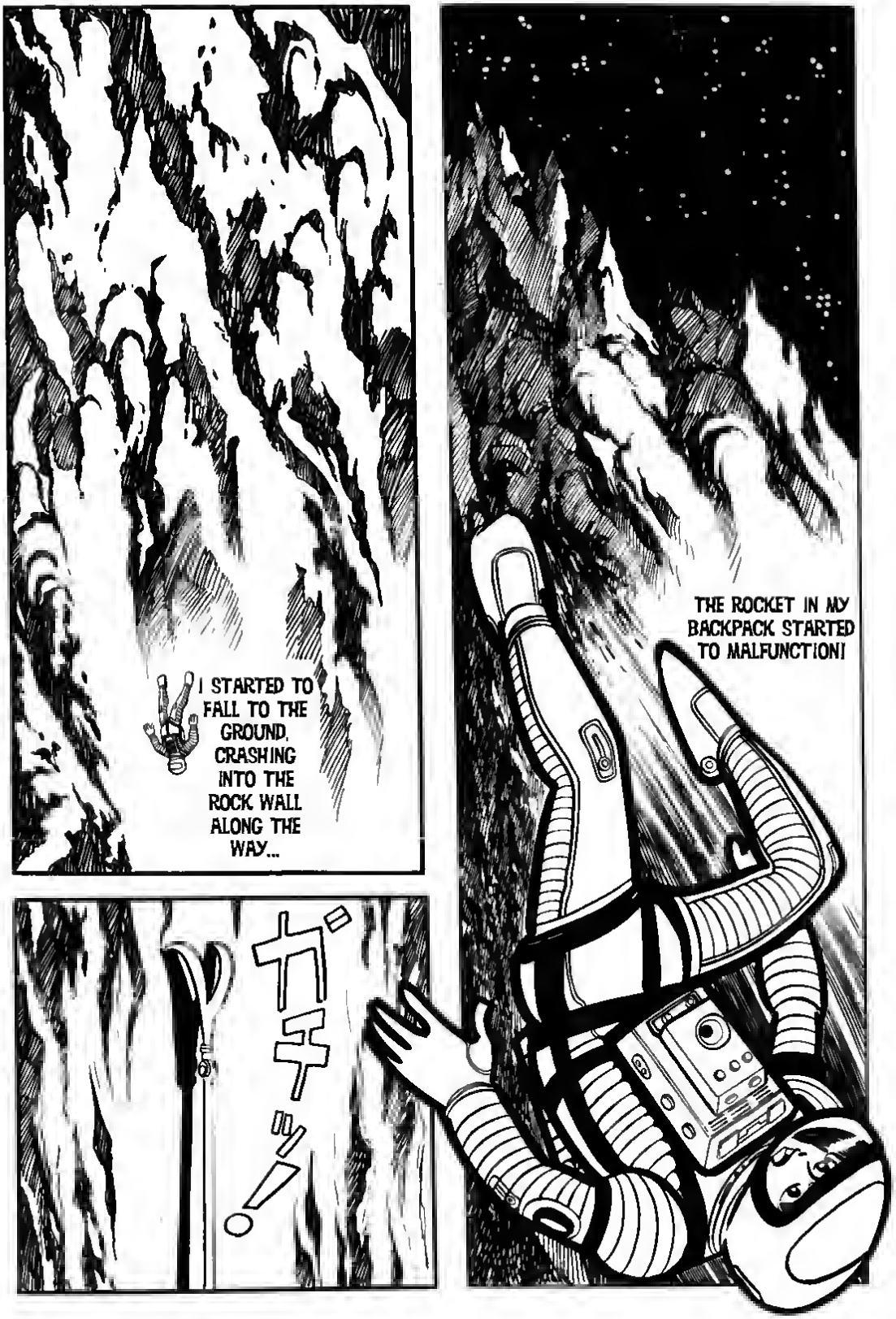
SOMETHING CLOUDLIKE WAS DISCOVERED PERIODICALLY COMING FROM THE ALPHONSUS CRATER. THIS UNIQUE ACTIVITY HAS SCIENTISTS CURIOUS... AND MANY BELIEVE IT MAY BE AN ACTIVE VOLCANO ON THE MOON.
AS A MEMBER OF THE APOLLO 18 CREW, I HAD COME TO THE MOON TO FIND OUT JUST WHAT THE TRUTH BEHIND THIS CRATER WAS.

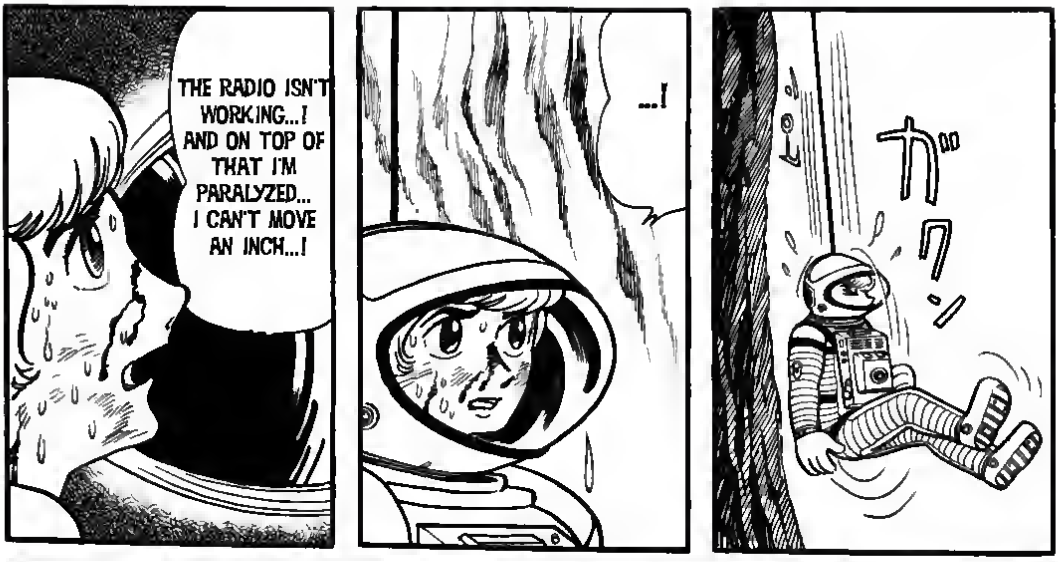
THE MOUNTAINS SURROUNDING ALPHONSUS ARE AROUND 15,000 METERS TALL. IT IS ASSUMED TO BE THE YOUNGEST CRATER ON THE MOON.
AT THE TIME, I HAD BEEN INVESTIGATING THE STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION OF THESE MOUNTAIN WALLS. IT WAS DAY NUMBER THREE.




I HAD SEARCHED THE DIAMETER OF THE CRATER FROM A HEIGHT OF APPROXIMATELY TEN KILOMETERS ABOVE THE GROUND. NOTHING. I WAS PLANNING ON RETURNING TO APOLLO. THAT'S WHEN IT HAPPENED...

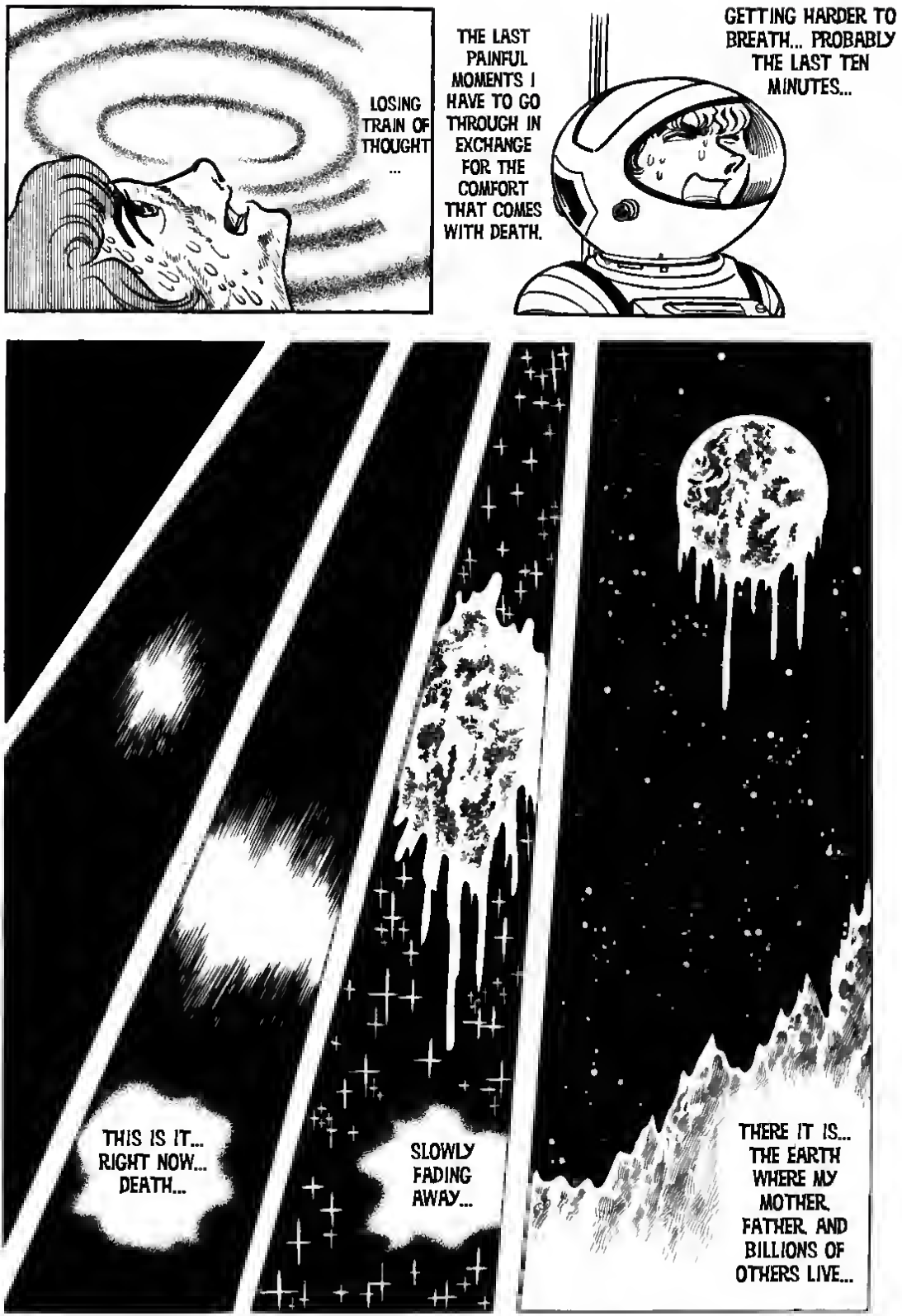

I WAS HOPING TO FIND SOME KIND OF OPENING THE STEAM WOULD EXIT FROM... THE POSSIBILITY OF THIS IS PRETTY THIN THOUGH. THE CLOUDS DO NOT OFTEN APPEAR IN THE CRATER.

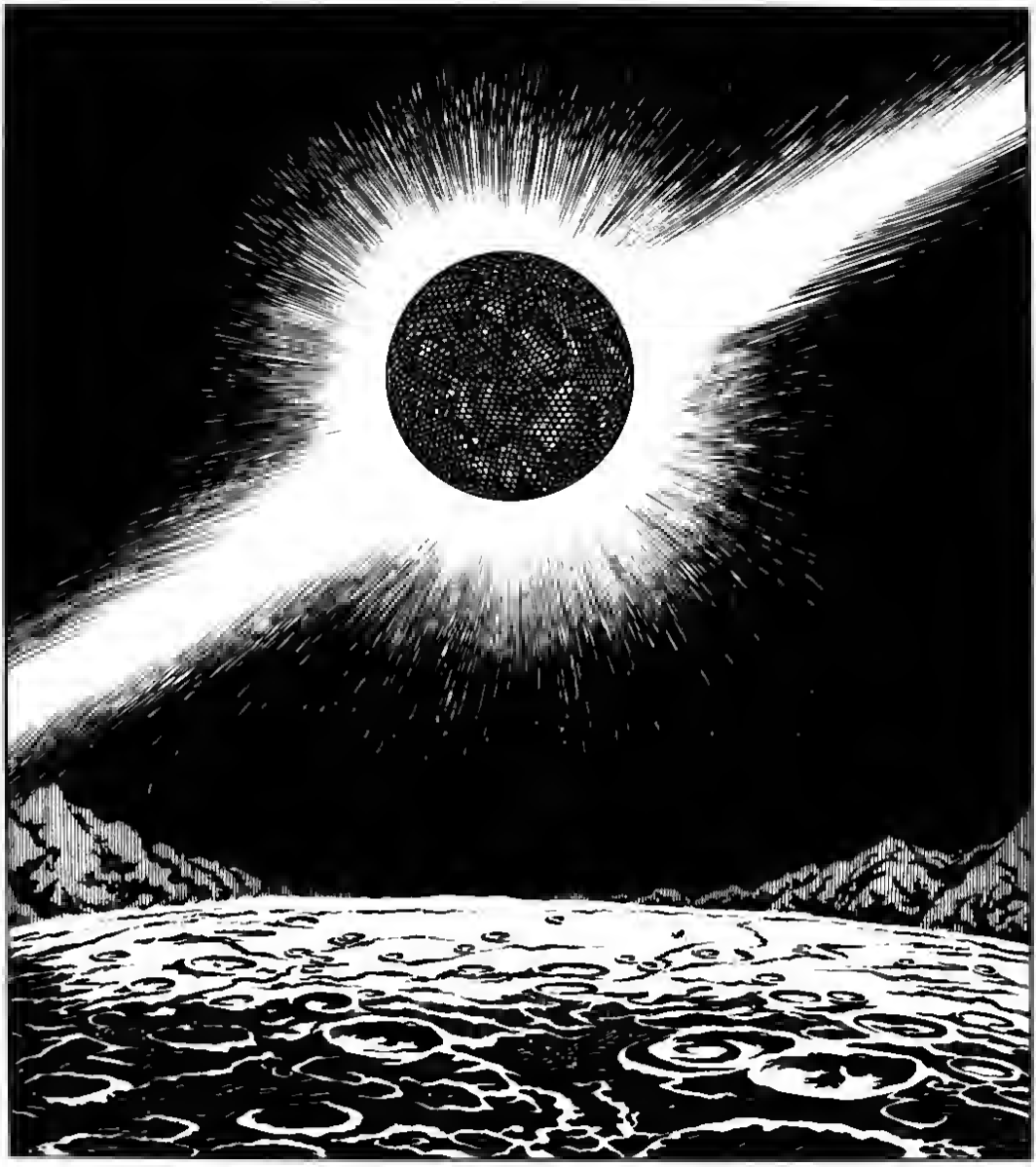

I STARTED TO FALL TO THE GROUND, CRASHING INTO THE ROCK WALL ALONG THE WAY...
THE ROCKET IN MY BACKPACK STARTED TO MALFUNCTION!
ガキッ!!

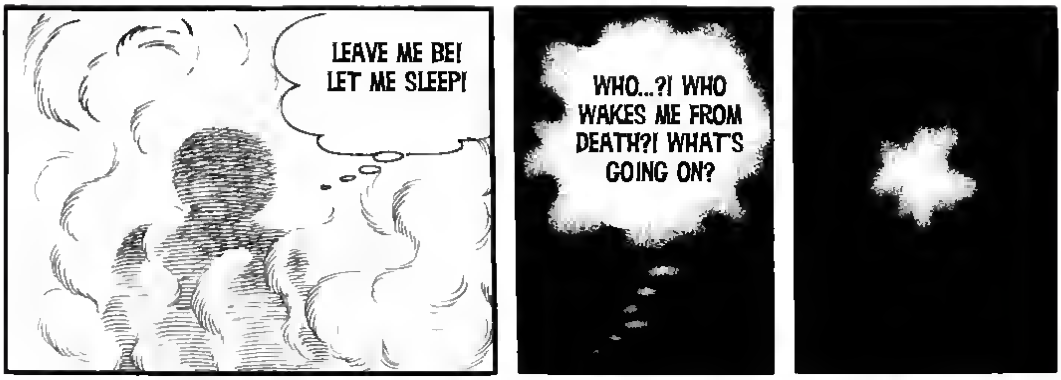

THE RADIO ISN'T WORKING...! AND ON TOP OF THAT I'M PARALYZED... I CAN'T MOVE AN INCH...!
...!
カッ!

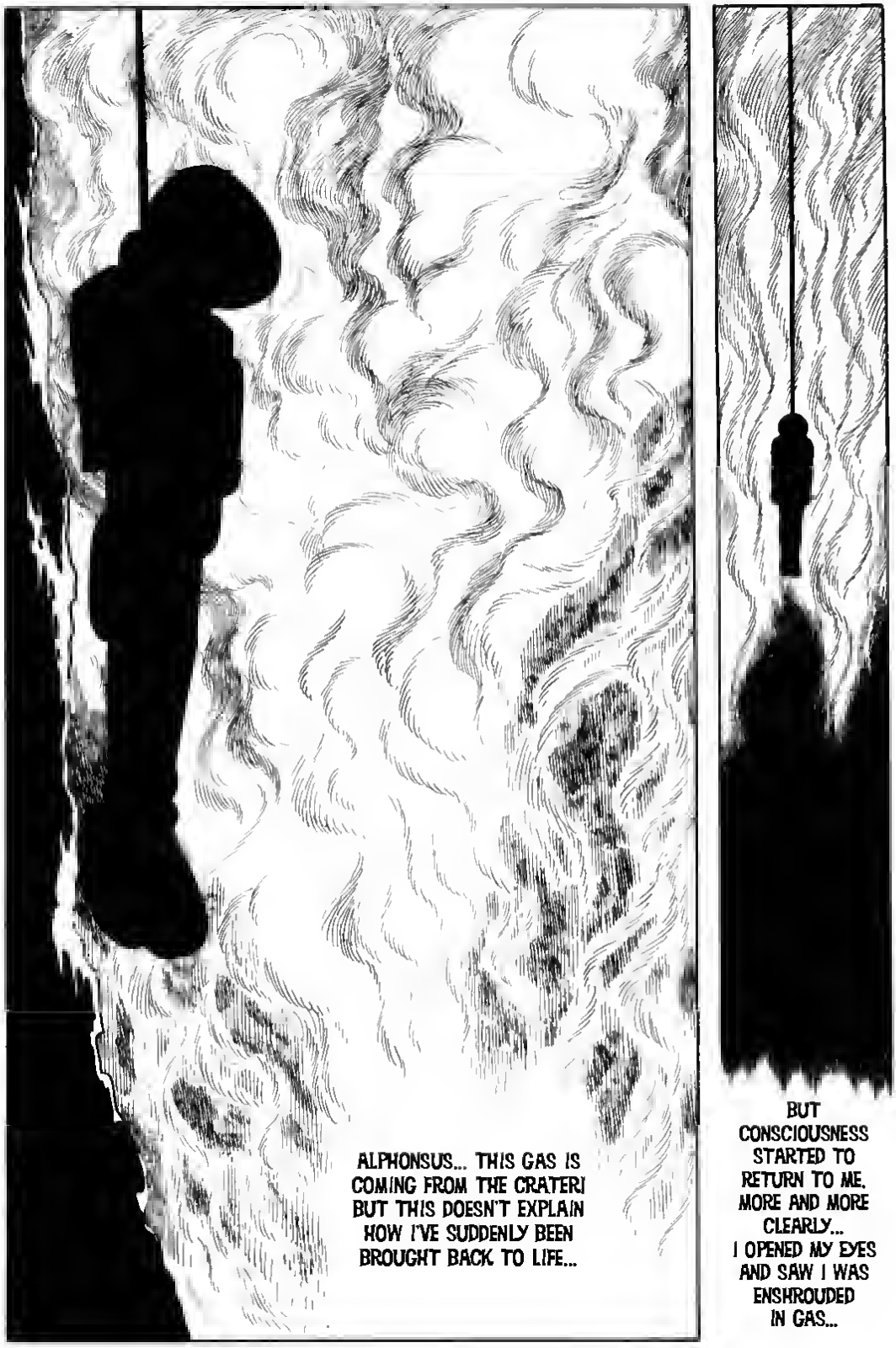
I WAS STUCK, HUNG FROM THE CLIFF, WATCHING APOLLO 18 FROM AFAR.

BUT I CAN'T REACH THEM.
IT'S RIGHT THERE! THE SHIP, MY TEAM MEMBERS...
I'VE ONLY GOT FIVE HOURS LEFT OF AIR...
I GUESS I'M DESTINED TO HANG RIGHT HERE AS A CORPSE FOR ALL ETERNITY.
ARE PROBABLY CLOSE TO ZERO PERCENT.
THE ODDS OF ANYONE ACTUALLY FINDING ME...
I HAD TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE SITUATION.
THE OTHERS WILL HAVE TO GIVE UP SEARCHING EVENTUALLY.


LOSING TRAIN OF THOUGHT ...
THE LAST PAINFUL MOMENTS I HAVE TO GO THROUGH IN EXCHANGE FOR THE COMFORT THAT COMES WITH DEATH.
GETTING HARDER TO BREATH... PROBABLY THE LAST TEN MINUTES...
THIS IS IT... RIGHT NOW... DEATH...
SLOWLY FADING AWAY...
THERE IT IS... THE EARTH WHERE MY MOTHER, FATHER, AND BILLIONS OF OTHERS LIVE...



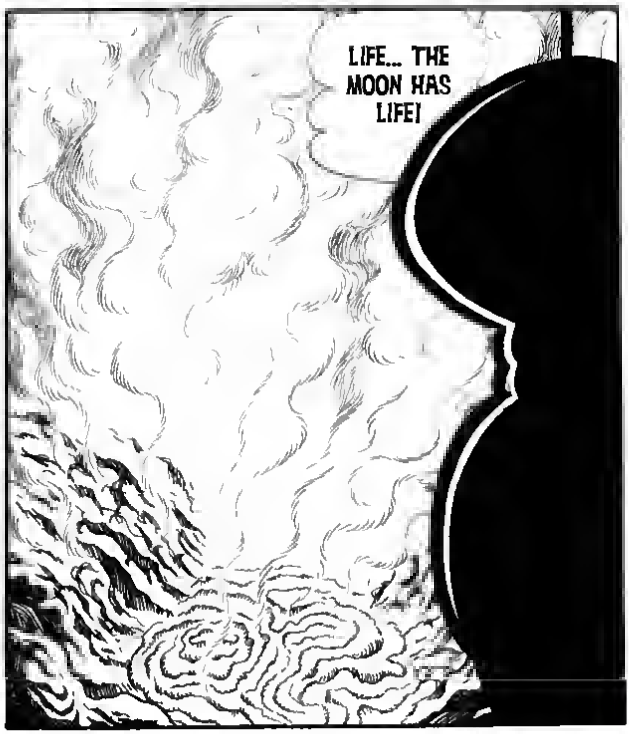

LEAVE ME BE! LET ME SLEEP!
WHO...?! WHO WAKES ME FROM DEATH?! WHAT'S GOING ON?

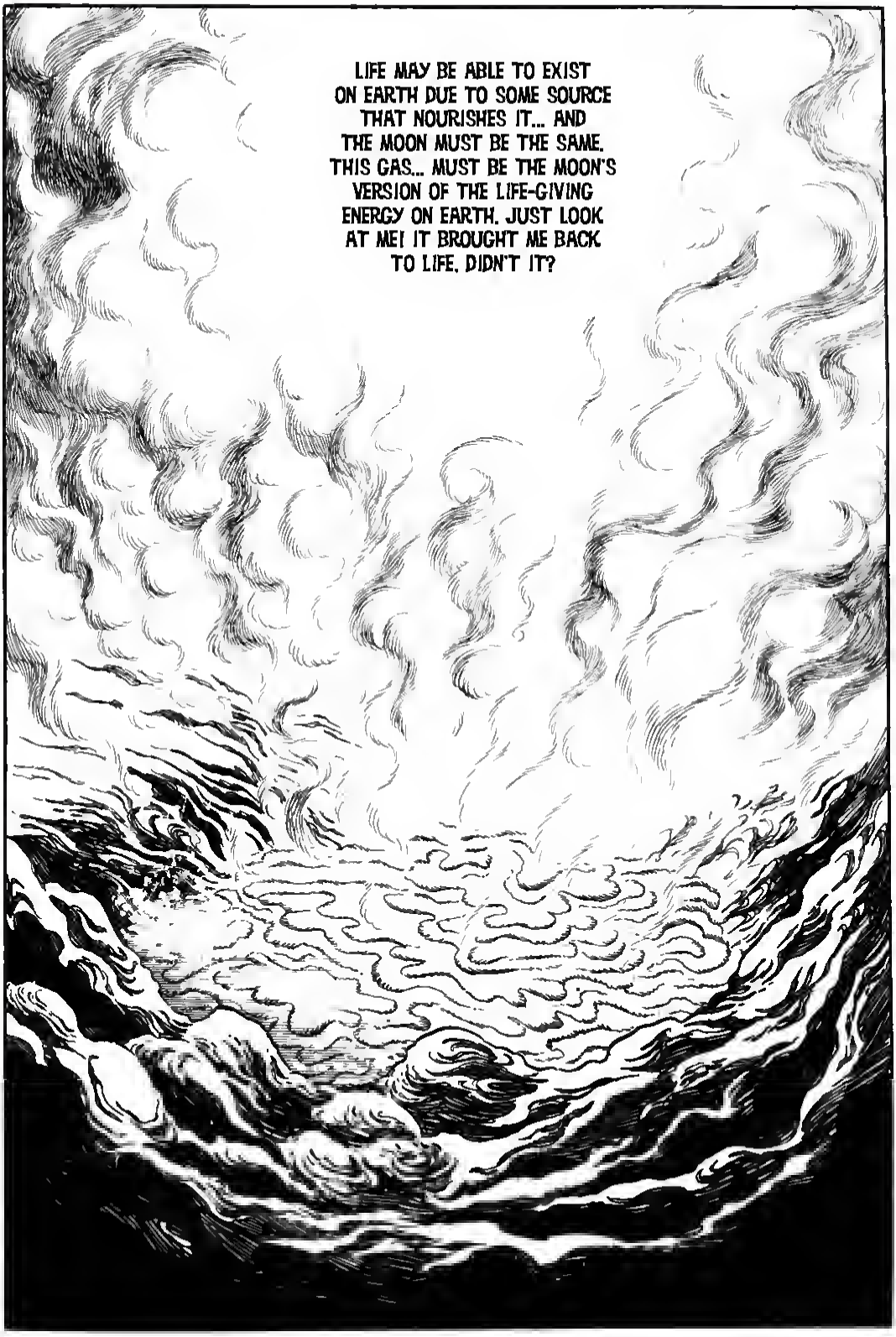

ALPHONSUS... THIS GAS IS COMING FROM THE CRATER! BUT THIS DOESN'T EXPLAIN HOW I'VE SUDDENLY BEEN BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE...
BUT CONSCIOUSNESS STARTED TO RETURN TO ME. MORE AND MORE CLEARLY... I OPENED MY EYES AND SAW I WAS ENSHROUDED IN GAS...

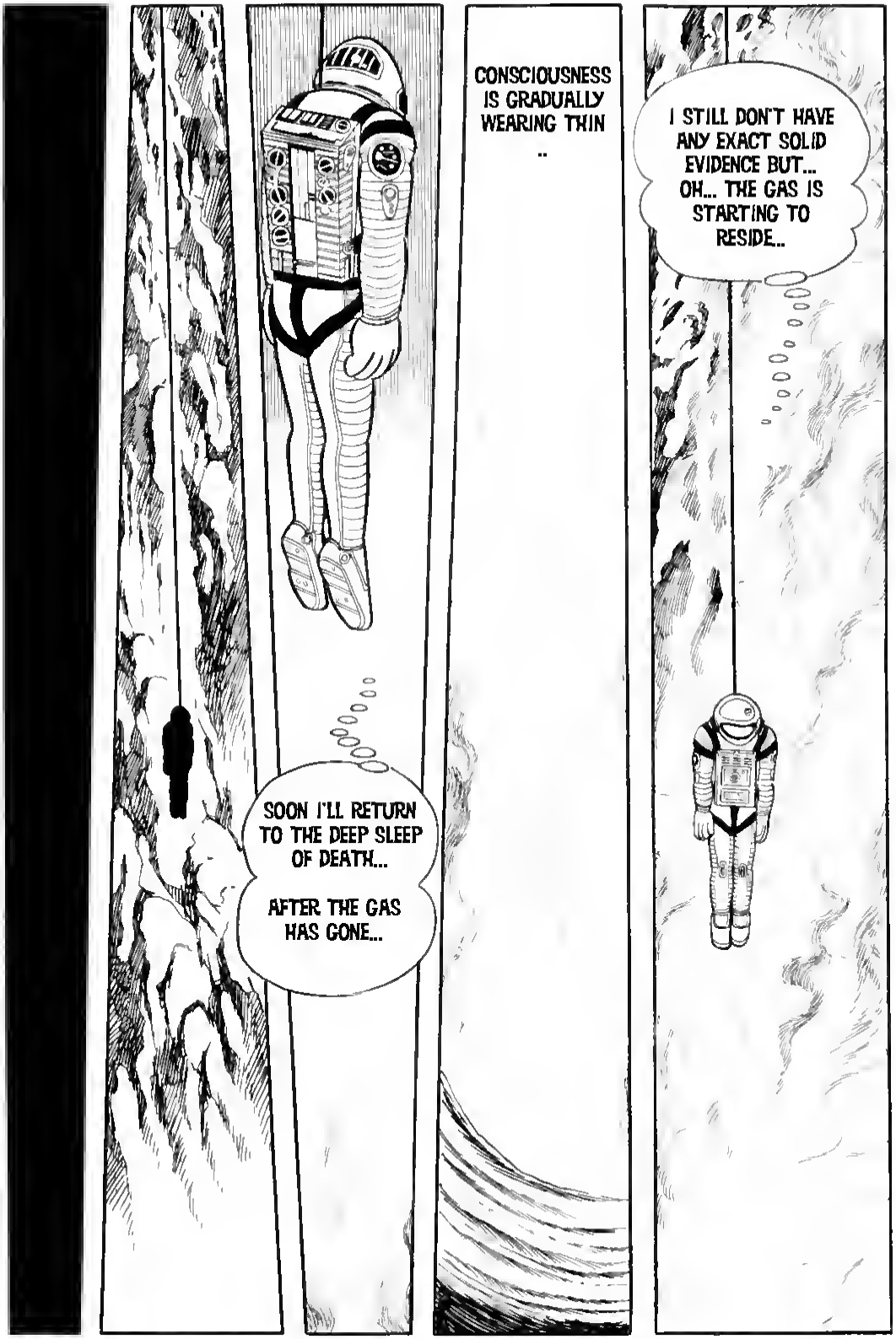
JUST WHAT IS THIS GAS...?
OR DOES IT? IS IT BECAUSE OF THE GAS?

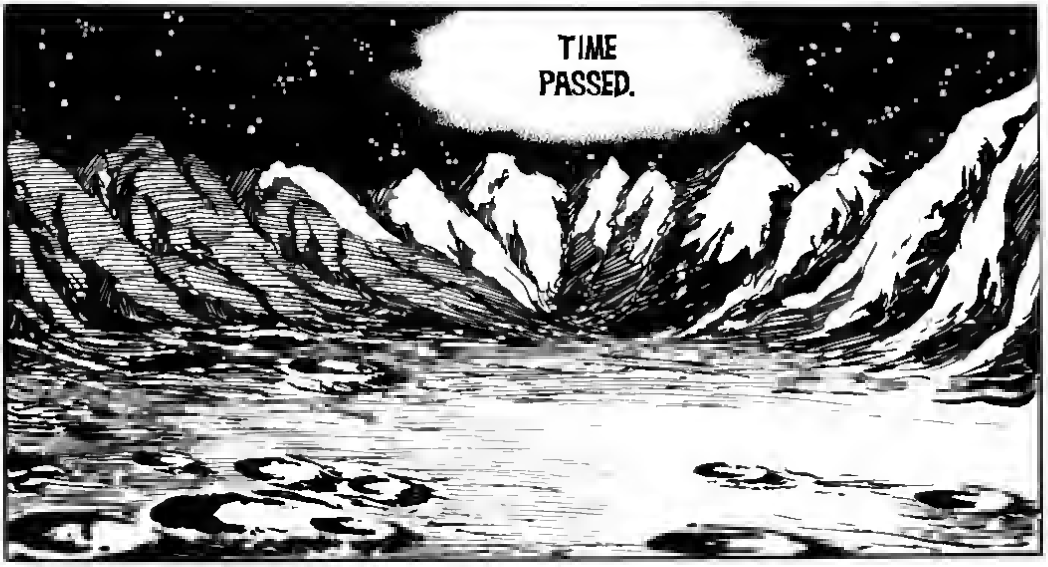
HOW MANY YEARS? JUST ONE? TEN? A HUNDRED? I WONDER WHAT THE EARTH IS LIKE NOW..
I'VE JUST BEEN HANGING HERE IN THIS CRATER FOR...

LOOK WHAT IT'S DONE FOR ME... IT'S A MIRACLE!
THIS GAS MIGHT BE THE SOURCE OF SOME LIFE-GIVING ENERGY...


LIFE... THE MOON HAS LIFE!

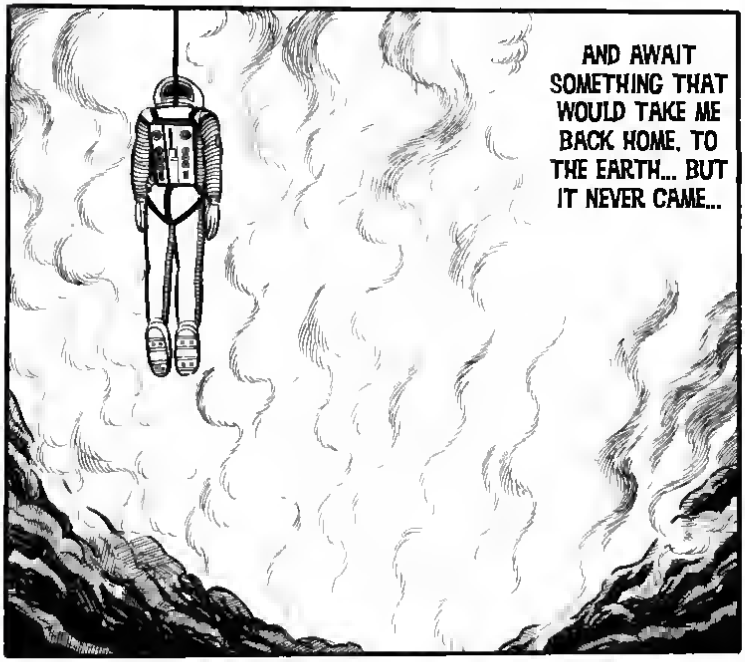

LIFE MAY BE ABLE TO EXIST ON EARTH DUE TO SOME SOURCE THAT NOURISHES IT... AND THE MOON MUST BE THE SAME. THIS GAS... MUST BE THE MOON'S VERSION OF THE LIFE-GIVING ENERGY ON EARTH. JUST LOOK AT ME! IT BROUGHT ME BACK TO LIFE, DIDN'T IT?

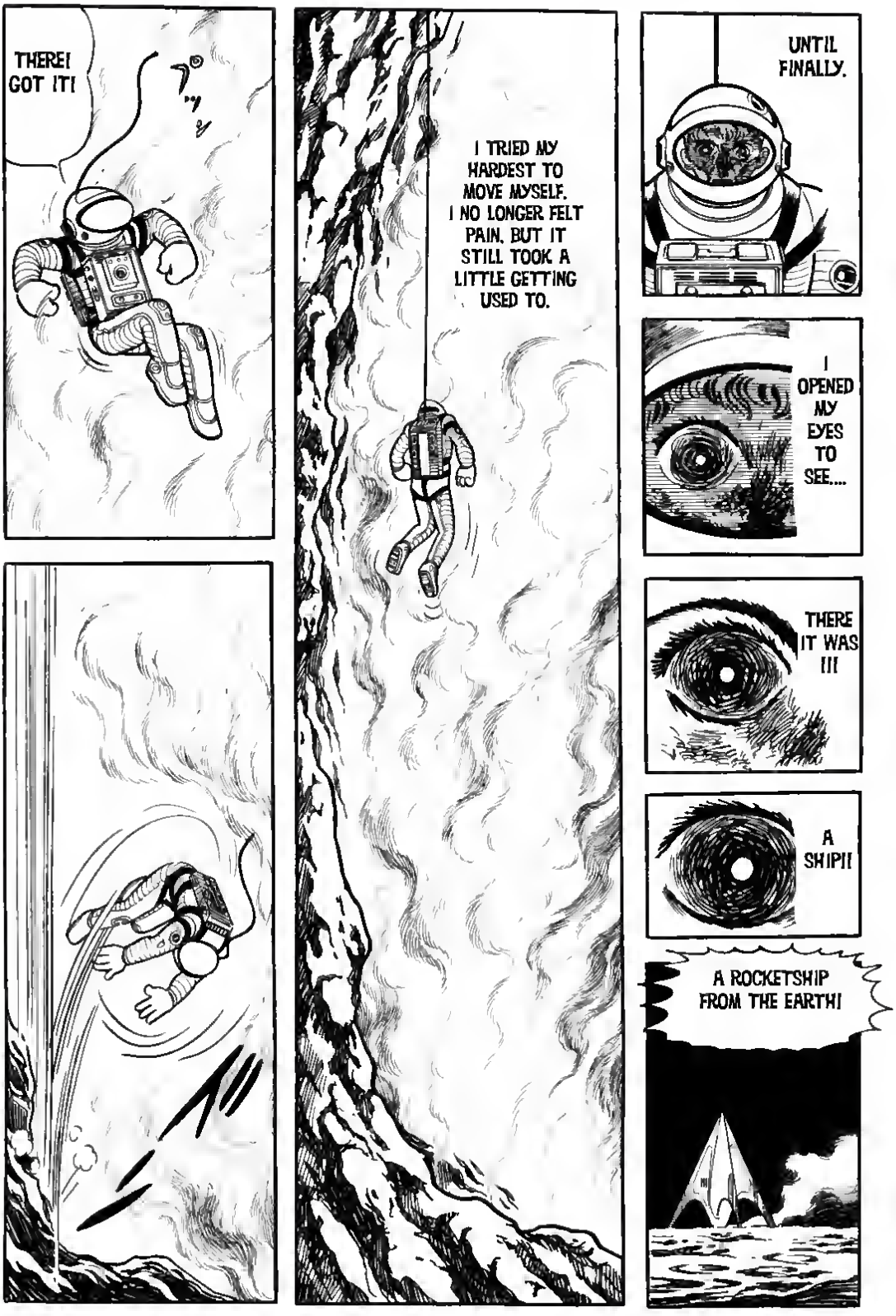

I STILL DON'T HAVE ANY EXACT SOLID EVIDENCE BUT... OH... THE GAS IS STARTING TO RESIDE..
CONSCIOUSNESS IS GRADUALLY WEARING THIN ..
SOON I'LL RETURN TO THE DEEP SLEEP OF DEATH...
AFTER THE GAS HAS GONE...


TIME
PASSED.

I WOULD
COME
BACK
TO LIFE...

GAS WOULD
COME FROM THE
CRATER AT
IRREGULAR
INTERVALS.


AND AWAIT
SOMETHING THAT
WOULD TAKE ME
BACK HOME, TO
THE EARTH... BUT
IT NEVER CAME...


THERE! GOT IT!
I TRIED MY HARDEST TO MOVE MYSELF. I NO LONGER FELT PAIN, BUT IT STILL TOOK A LITTLE GETTING USED TO.
UNTIL FINALLY.
I OPENED MY EYES TO SEE...
THERE IT WAS !!!
A SHIP!!
A ROCKETSHIP FROM THE EARTH!

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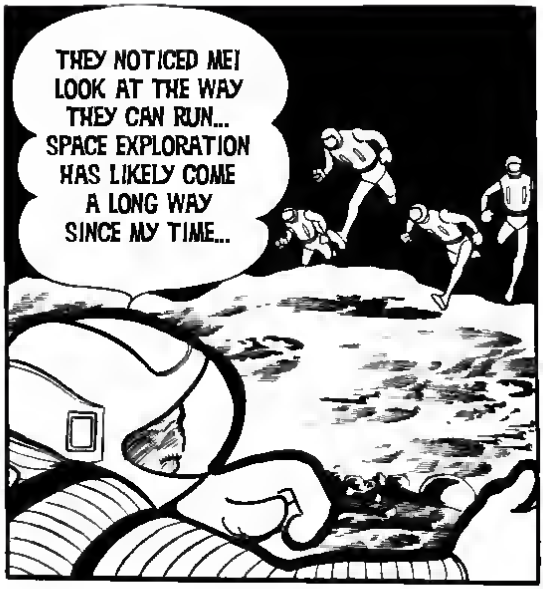
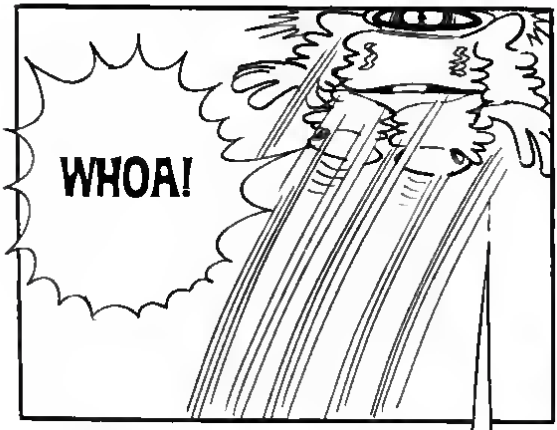
HELP...


THEY NOTICED ME! LOOK AT THE WAY THEY CAN RUN... SPACE EXPLORATION HAS LIKELY COME A LONG WAY SINCE MY TIME...

ARE YOU OK? CAN YOU WALK?
HOW OLD IS HIS SUIT...?

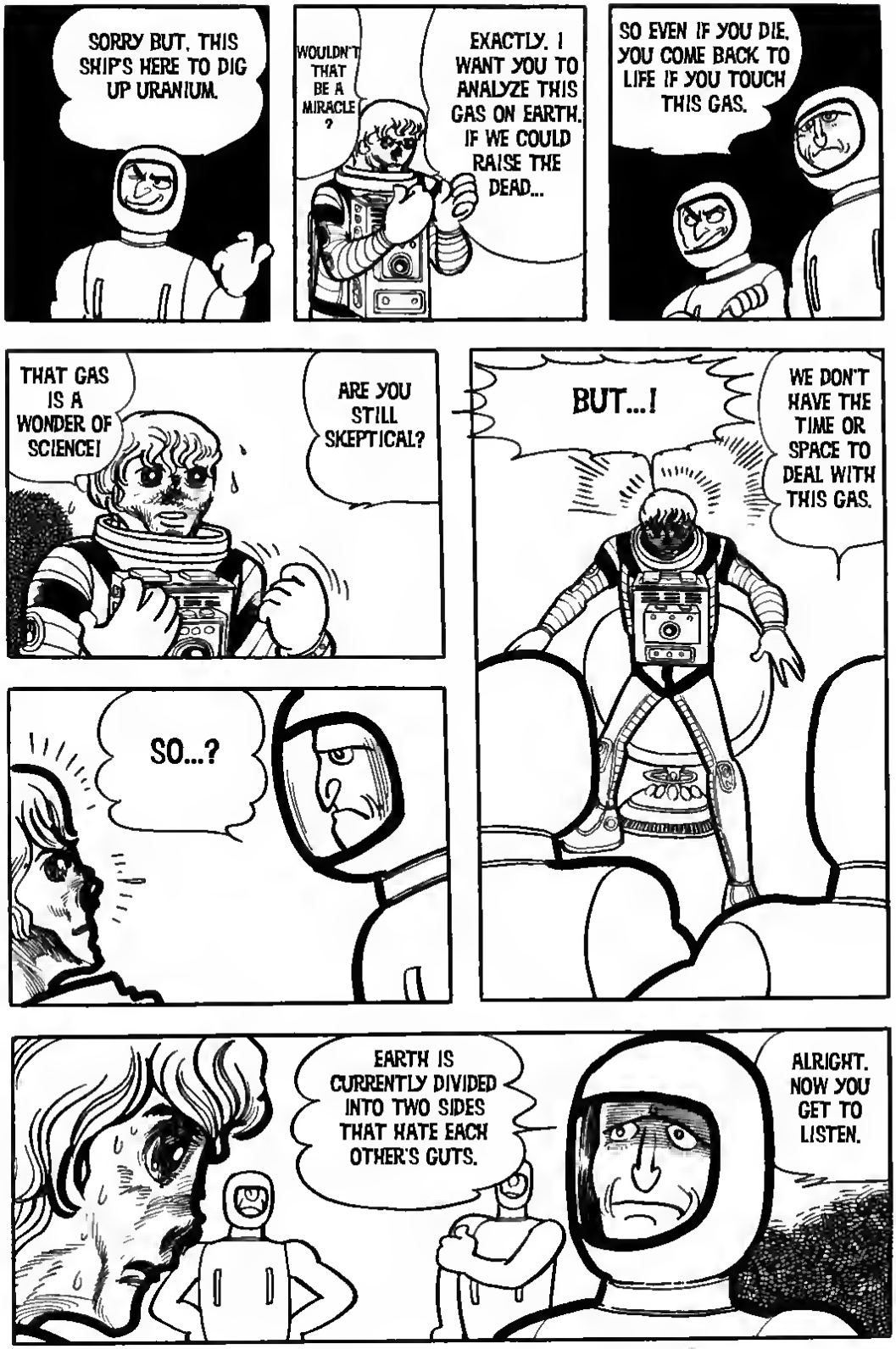

WHOA!

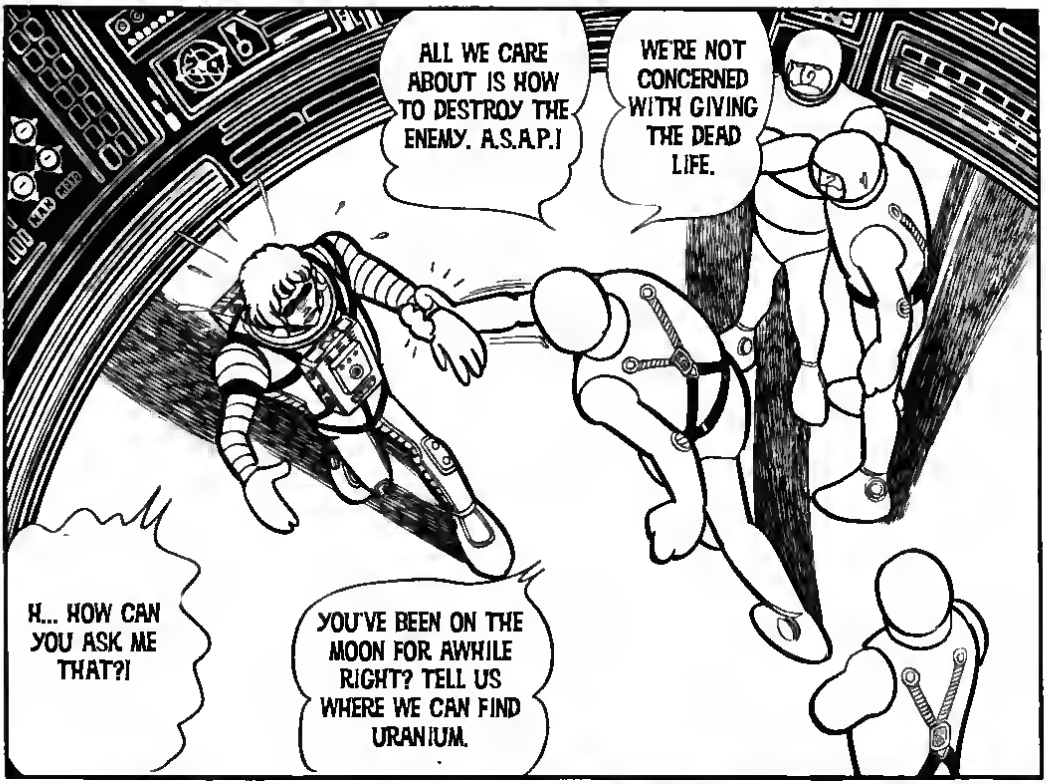
IT'S A MUMMY...!!

WHAT COUNTRY USES THAT ASTRONAUT SUIT?
LOOK. WHO'S THAT OVER THERE?
HE SEEMS LOST.
LET'S GO TALK TO HIM.

H, HOLD ON A SECOND!!
I'M NOT A MONSTER... LISTEN TO ME...
DAMN IT... FINE. I'LL JUST...

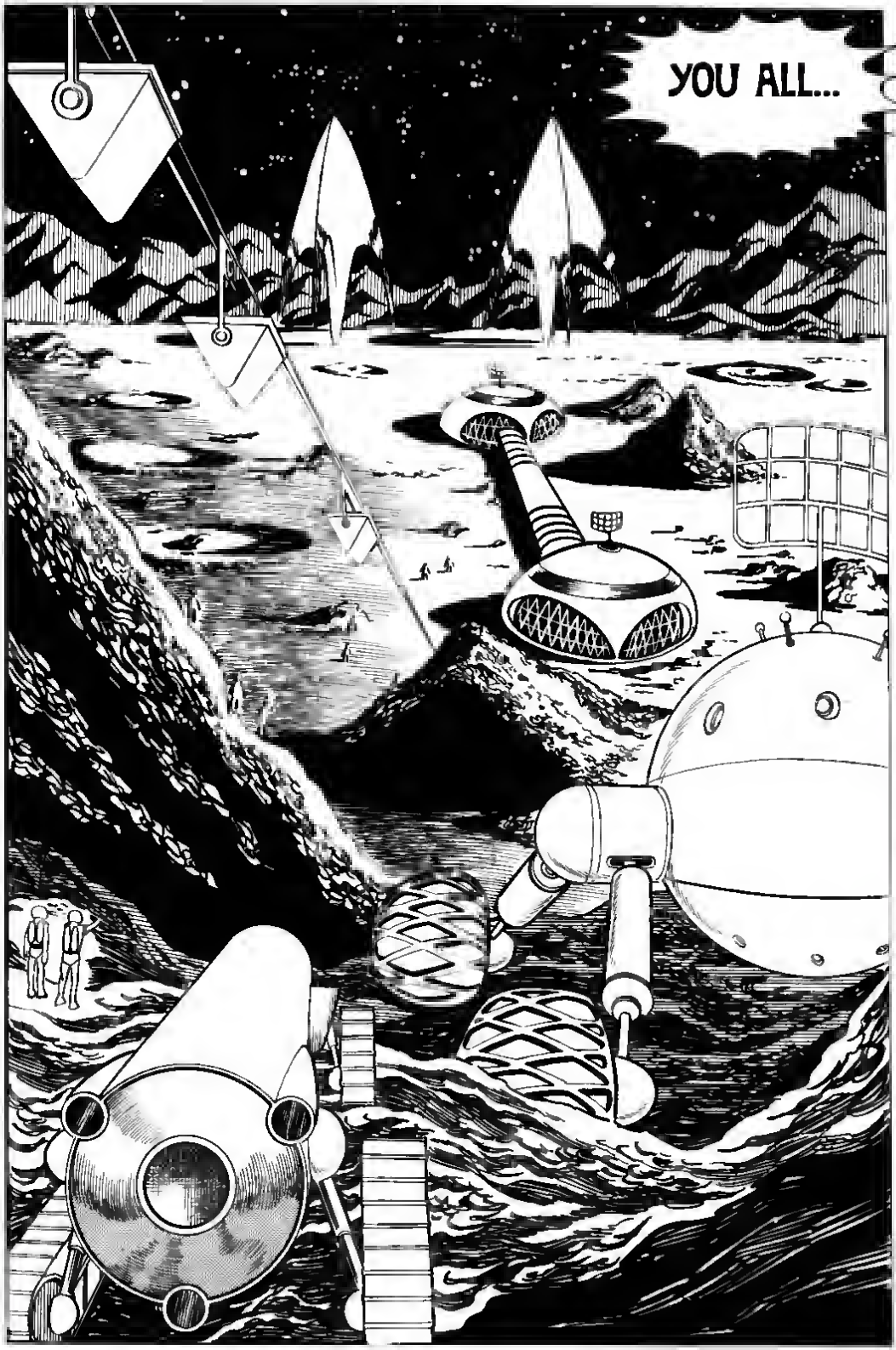
THE LIGHT.
WAIT.
YOU CAN COME OUT.
ALRIGHT.
MY NAME IS WILLIAM FROST... I WAS A MEMBER OF APOLLO 18. I'M NOT A MONSTER, PLEASE LISTEN TO ME I HAVE SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO SAY.
LOOK.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT YEAR IT IS? 2104.
YEAH... LOOK AT YOU. YOU'RE A MUMMY!
IT MAY BE HARD TO BELIEVE BUT JUST LOOK AT ME. I'M PROOF!
HMM... "MOON GAS". HUH.
2104... SO IT'S BEEN 130 YEARS...

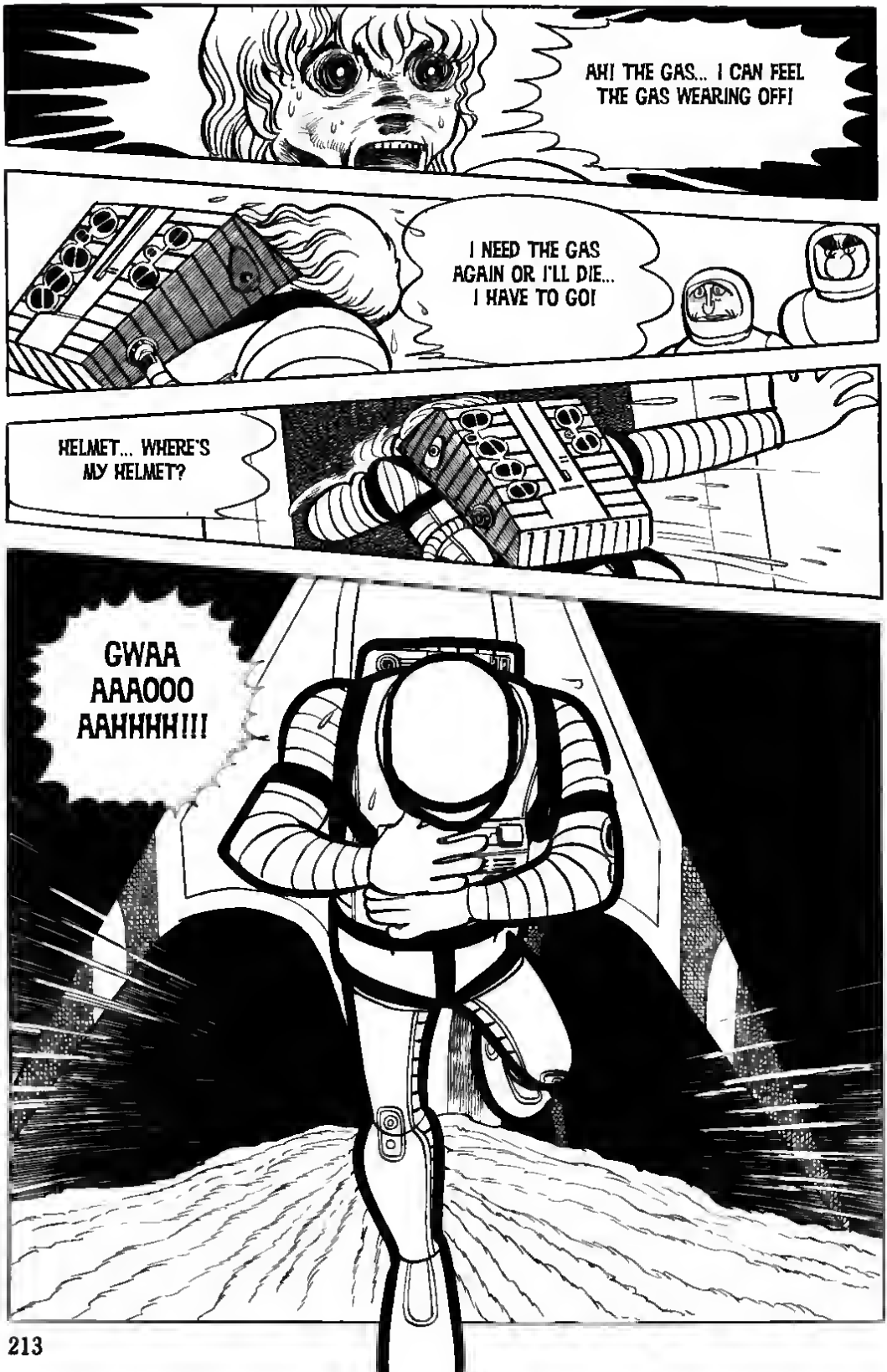

SORRY BUT, THIS SHIP'S HERE TO DIG UP URANIUM.
WOULDN'T THAT BE A MIRACLE ?
EXACTLY. I WANT YOU TO ANALYZE THIS GAS ON EARTH. IF WE COULD RAISE THE DEAD...
SO EVEN IF YOU DIE, YOU COME BACK TO LIFE IF YOU TOUCH THIS GAS.
THAT GAS IS A WONDER OF SCIENCE!
ARE YOU STILL SKEPTICAL?
BUT...!
WE DON'T HAVE THE TIME OR SPACE TO DEAL WITH THIS GAS.
SO...?
EARTH IS CURRENTLY DIVIDED INTO TWO SIDES THAT HATE EACH OTHER'S GUTS.
ALRIGHT. NOW YOU GET TO LISTEN.

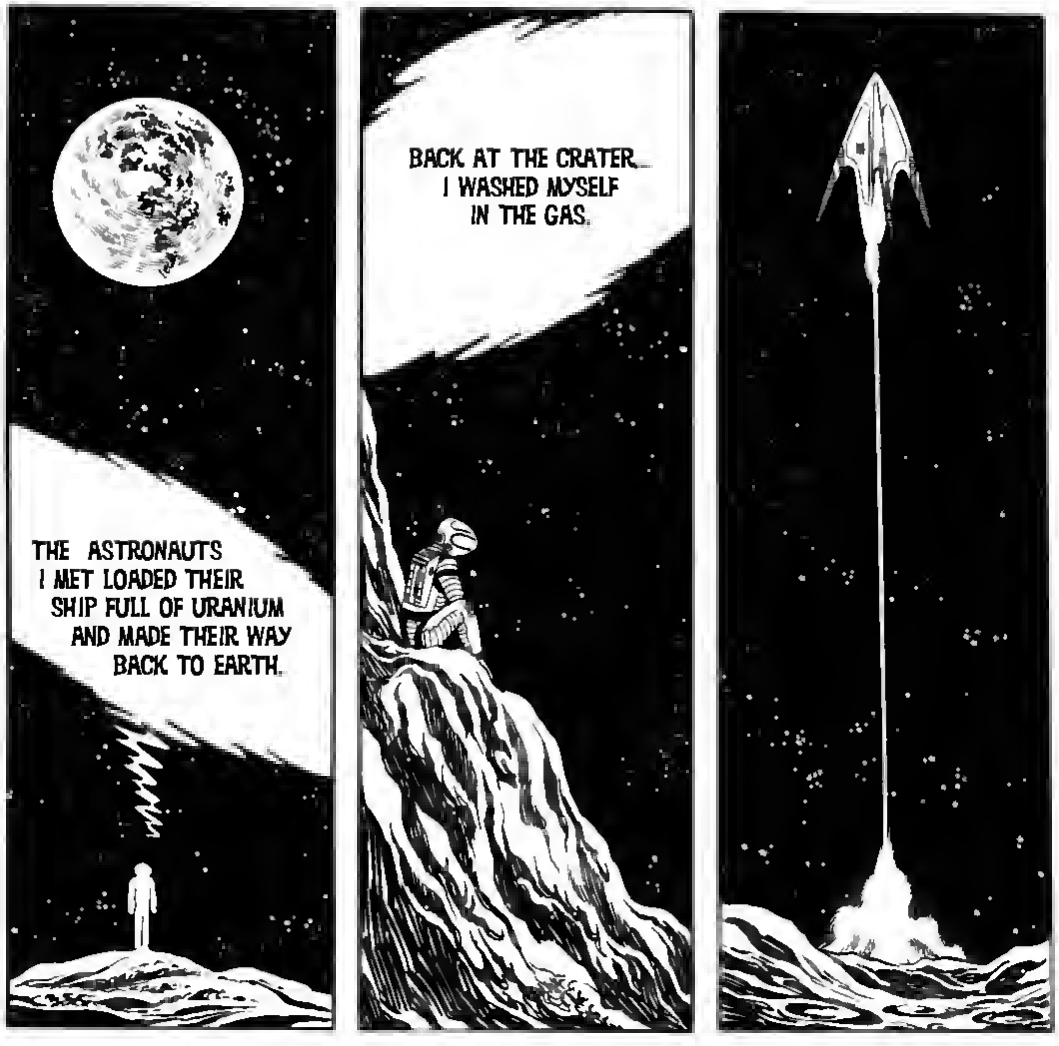

ALL WE CARE ABOUT IS HOW TO DESTROY THE ENEMY. A.S.A.P.!
WE'RE NOT CONCERNED WITH GIVING THE DEAD LIFE.
H... HOW CAN YOU ASK ME THAT?!
YOU'VE BEEN ON THE MOON FOR AWHILE RIGHT? TELL US WHERE WE CAN FIND URANIUM.

THAT URANIUM'S GOING TO SERVE A GOOD PURPOSE BACK ON EARTH...
OTHER THAN THAT. WHAT USE WOULD THE MOON HAVE TO US? NOTHING.

THIS IS INSANE... TO THINK ABOUT WHAT I'VE BEEN THROUGH... AND ALL YOU CARE ABOUT IS URANIUM?


YOU ALL...

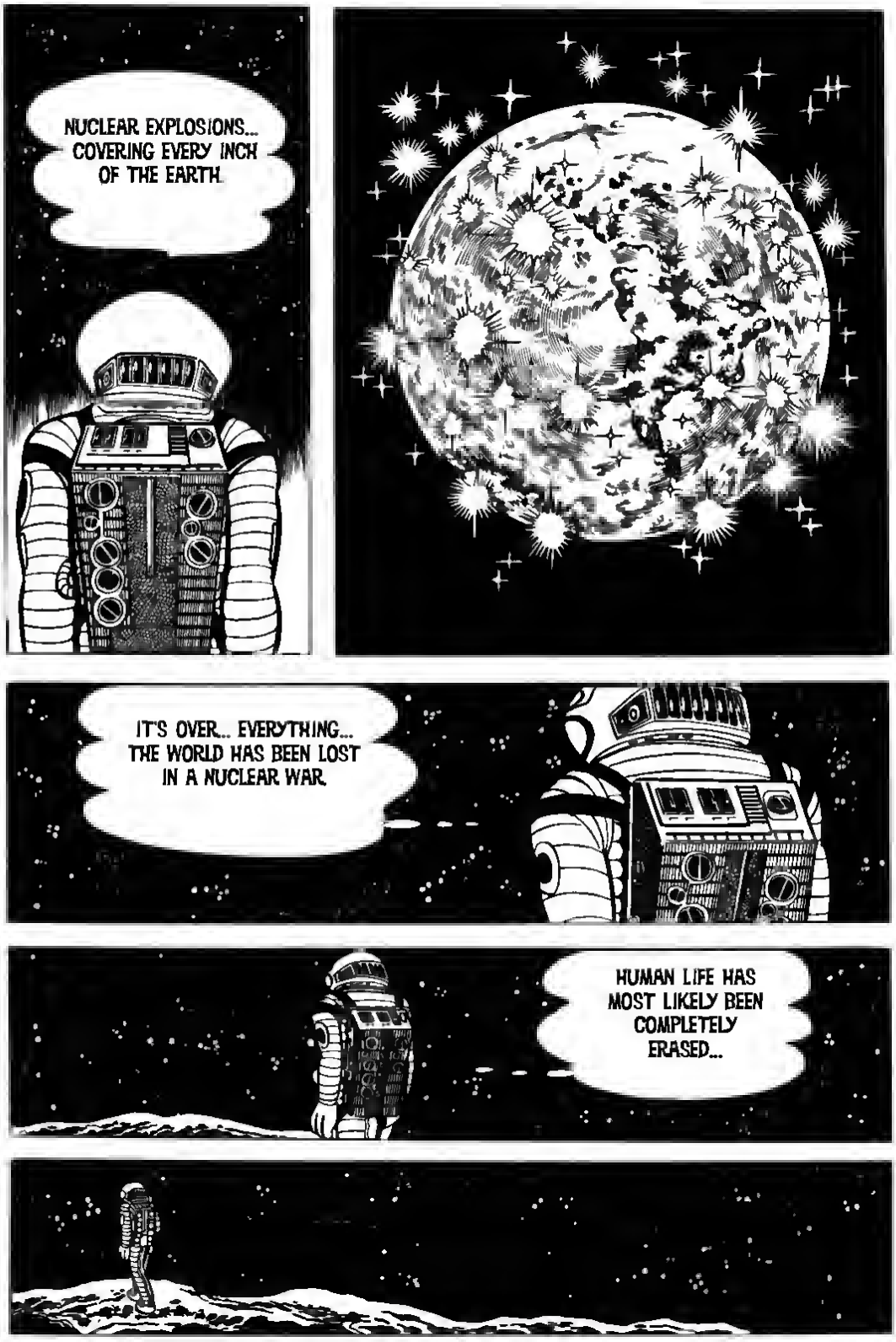

AH! THE GAS... I CAN FEEL THE GAS WEARING OFF!
I NEED THE GAS AGAIN OR I'LL DIE... I HAVE TO GO!
HELMET... WHERE'S MY HELMET?
GWAA AAAOOO AAHHHH!!!

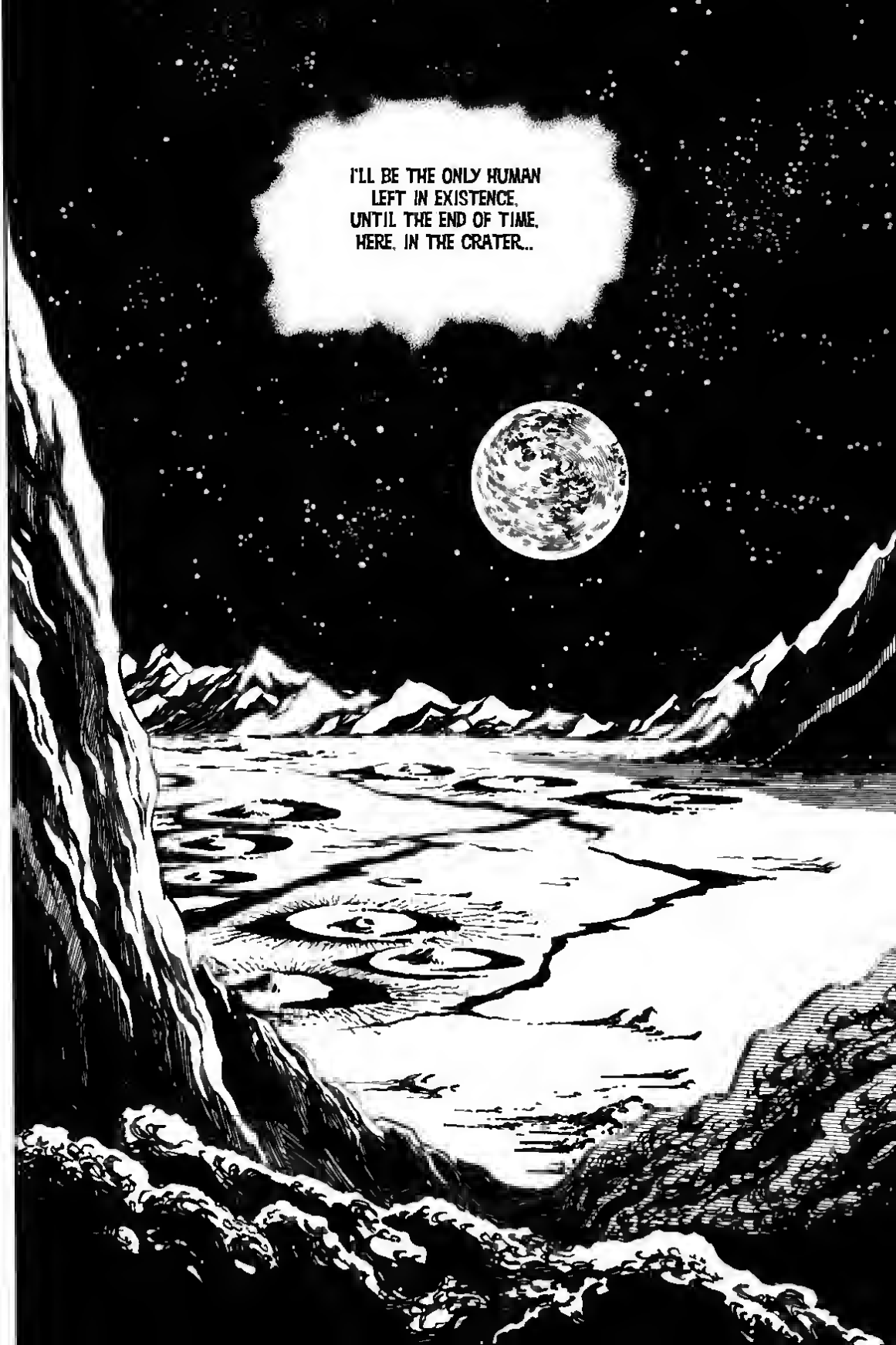

THE ASTRONAUTS I MET LOADED THEIR SHIP FULL OF URANIUM AND MADE THEIR WAY BACK TO EARTH.
BACK AT THE CRATER... I WASHED MYSELF IN THE GAS.

A FEW DAYS PASSED.

I LOOKED AT THE EARTH TO FIND...

SOMETHING HORRIBLE WAS UNDERWAY.


NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS... COVERING EVERY INCH OF THE EARTH.
IT'S OVER... EVERYTHING... THE WORLD HAS BEEN LOST IN A NUCLEAR WAR.
HUMAN LIFE HAS MOST LIKELY BEEN COMPLETELY ERASED...


I'LL BE THE ONLY HUMAN
LEFT IN EXISTENCE,
UNTIL THE END OF TIME,
HERE, IN THE CRATER...